DECEMBER 1990

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THE DARK SIDE

The Magazine of the Macabre and Fantastic

TWO EVIL EYES

Dario Argenta an filming Edgar Allan Pae

THE BLACK CAT

Feline Frights with Caraline Munra

WEREWOLF

Hair Today – Gone Tamarrow!

SCANNERS 2

Mind Blowing Mayhem

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

Lean, Green And On The Screen

Great Free Two Evil Eyes Poster Inside

Plus:
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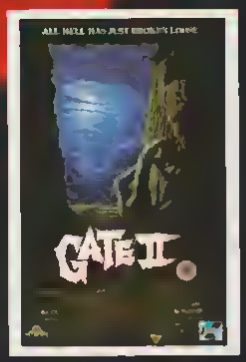
THE NERVE SHATTERING SEQUEL TO 'THE GATE' - THE HORROR SMASH OF THE '80s.

GATE



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THE DARK SIDE

The Magazine of the Macabre and Fantastic

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THE DARK SIDE
The Magazine of the Macabre and Fantastic

Introduction

We recently conducted a survey which revealed some interesting statistics about the attitude of the British public toward the current horror scene. First came the (hardly startling) discovery that the greater degree of males questioned said they would find it more terrifying to be stranded on a desert island with Margaret Thatcher than being locked in a cellar with Freddy, lost in a graveyard with Christopher Lee, or trapped in a lift with Jeffrey Archer! On a more serious note, our findings revealed that only a quarter of the respondents believed that modern day horror films encouraged copycat violence, although there was a great sexual and age difference, with women and older generations being far more concerned about the effects of these films (which may explain Barry Norman's increased dislike of the genre as he gets nearer to collecting his bus pass).

Our survey also revealed men and women to be poles apart in their enjoyment of being scared rigid. A far greater percentage of women found horror films unacceptably gory than men, and while most fellas said they found them funny rather than scary, the women didn't agree. We also discovered that a clear North/South divide exists, with a greater following for horror products in areas like Birmingham and Scotland.

Pulling all the various facts and figures together left us with a picture of the archetypal horror fan as a single male, aged 15-24, who lives north of the border – See you Jimmy, and pass the chainsaw!

It would appear that those who feel modern horror films are unacceptably gory and encourage violence are the very people least likely to have watched them! For young people, the horror film has become an integral part of their lives, and they clearly do not see a strong connection between violence on the screen and violence on the streets. Oh, and nine out of ten people said their cats still prefer Whiskas...

As a footnote, I was invited to take part in an LBC phone-in on the current horror scene, and was not at all surprised to discover the show's host was determined to steer the conversation round to 'video nasties' and 'snuff movies.' It seemed his idea of a horror fan was a twisted, lonely soul sitting alone in an attic room slobbering over an uncut copy of DRILLER KILLER. The media has a lot to answer for. Personally I'd much rather meet your average well-adjusted horror buff than the kind of person who takes part in LBC phone-ins...

Before I leave you to get stuck into this fright-packed third issue, I would like to thank you all for your support so far – DARK SIDE sales are going so well that I have at last been able to give up my paper round! Short story contributions have also been flooding in fast, and I'm delighted to say the standard of material received has been very high. But can you PLEASE note that the maximum length required is 1500 words, and all manuscripts should be typed on one side of the paper only, double-spaced, and accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Catch you later...

Allan Bryce

Contributors for this issue Alan Frank Alan McKenzie Alan Jones, Jan Abbott John Brosnan Chris Knight Stefan Jaworzyn Richard Marshall Norman Taylor Maitland McDonagh Publishing Director Raymond Lewis Managing Director Peter Welham Production Controller Joyce Penfold Printed and bound by Carlisle Web Offset Newton Trading Estate Carlisle Cumbria CA2 7MR Typesetting and colour repro Ebony Liskeard Cornwall News Trade Distributor IPC Marketforce Kings Reach Tower Stamford Street London SE1 9LS Subscription Rates Refer to subs page this issue THE DARK SIDE is published on the 4th Thursday of each month preceding the coverdate American Bureau – Maitland McDonagh
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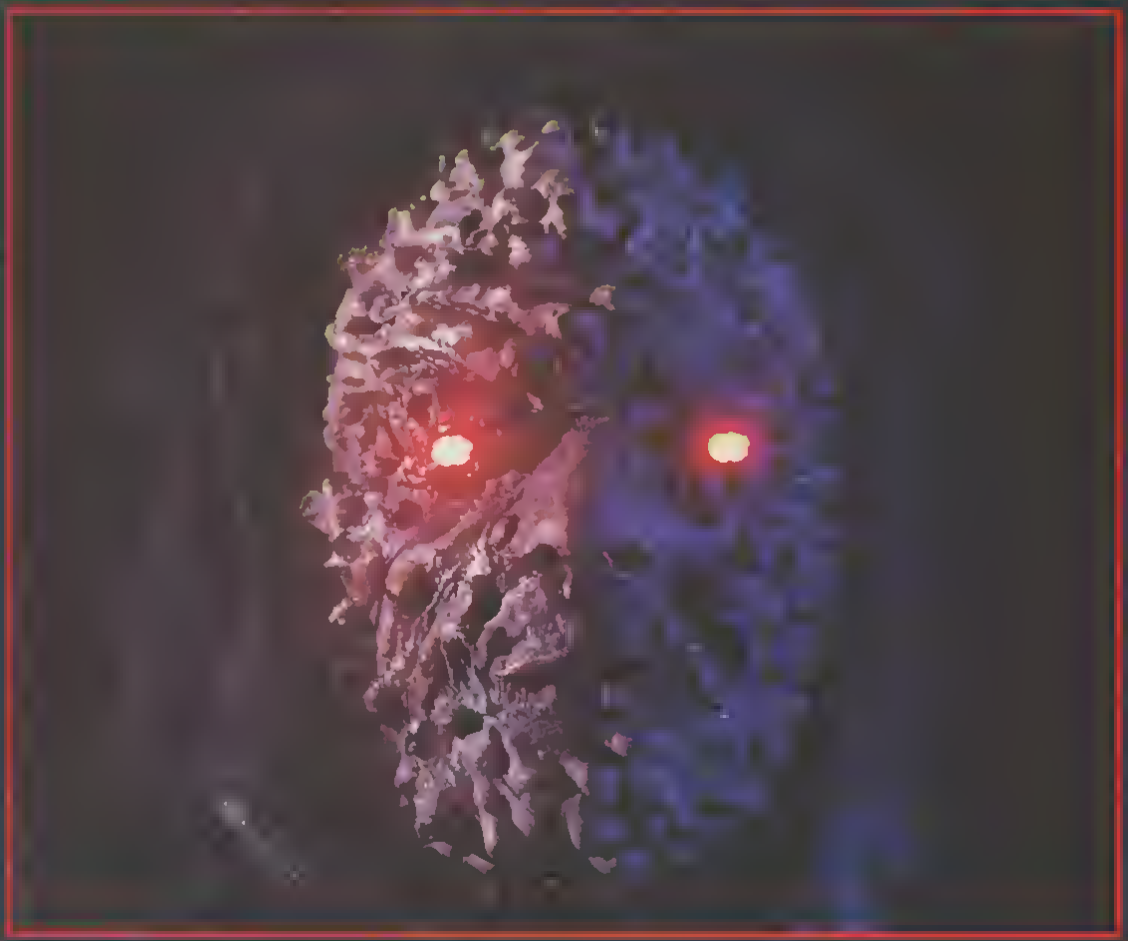
THE CAT THAT GOT THE SCREAM

Luigi Cozzi's unorthodox version of Poe's Black Cat is about to arrive on video. Alan Jones has the inside story.



That's the last time I fall asleep on the sunbed!

Luigi Cozzi directed his first movie in 1968, an adaptation of Frederik Pohl's THE TUNNEL UNDER THE WORLD. But his career didn't really take off until he was given the one seal of approval that counted at the time. An obsessed film buff since his early teens, (in the Sixties he was editor of 'Galaxy' magazine and the Italian correspondent for 'Famous Monsters'), Cozzi saw Dario Argento's ground-breaking THE BIRD WITH THE CRYSTAL PLUMAGE in 1969 and wanted to add his praise to the widespread critical acclaim. Finally he got hold of Argento's home phone number and nervously gave the fledgling director a call to convey his ecstatic feelings. Argento was so surprised by this complete stranger raving about his movie, he agreed to meet Cozzi for a social night out. They spent the entire evening discussing favourite movies and directors and forged a lasting friendship that culminated in their co-ownership of Italy's

first ever Sci-Fi/Horror bookshop 'Profondo Rosso' in late 1989.

After writing a novel, 'Island of the Golden Spiders', Cozzi got his biggest break when Argento asked him to co-script FOUR FLIES ON GREY VELVET in 1971. Then the director produced a RAI TV series under the umbrella title La Porta sul Buio', ('The Door to the Dark'), in 1972 and asked Cozzi to direct one of the four episodes. Because Argento introduced each segment, the main reason why he became such a well-known figure and homefront superstar, Cozzi found himself in the new talent frontline as far as producers were concerned.

Cozzi eventually remade his television segment, 'La Vicino di Casa', as THE MURDERER MUST KILL AGAIN/THE SPIDER in 1975 and continued his haphazard career, often under the pseudonym Lewis Coates, with exploitation – LA PORTIERA NUDA, science-fiction – STARCRASH, ALIEN CONTAMINATION, tear-jerkers – STELLA, Cozzi's personal favourite and the title of his short-lived fanzine, sand and sandal – HERCULES 1 and II, SINBAD, and horror – his last movie PAGANINI HORROR.

Always in demand on Italian television whenever there is a discussion about the genre, Cozzi's latest offering is EDGAR ALLAN POE'S THE BLACK CAT for Menahem Golan's 21st. Century Film Corporation. But don't be fooled by the catch-penny title forced on Cozzi so it would slot neatly into the bewildering amount of new Poe movies packaged by the former Cannon boss. Cozzi explained, "Golan and I have nurtured a good relationship since HERCULES. He signed a distribution contract for the film without even reading a script. I shot the film in May and June 1989 halting production when Dario asked me to be second unit assistant on 'The Black Cat', his TWO EVIL EYES segment. When I finished my Pittsburgh stint, I resumed filming in September for a week and then learnt Golan was changing the title. He'd pre-sold THE BLACK CAT as one of the many Poe titles he was in the middle of making. But it didn't get made and he had to fulfil his contractual obligations. So I added inserts of cats and a line of dialogue, 'Never play the part of THE BLACK CAT!', to justify the title".

EDGAR ALLAN POE'S THE BLACK CAT started life as DE: PROFUNDIS before OUT OF THE DEPTHS was chosen as the production title. Both names appear in the completed movie as films within the film. As co-scripted by Cozzi and Daria Nicolodi, Argento's former lover and favoured star, it was intended to be the completion of The Three Mothers trilogy begun by Argento with SUSPIRIA and continued in INFERNO. Cozzi said, "Daria is a very close friend. We wrote PAGANINI HORROR together. But she wanted an all-stops out picture focusing on Levana, the Mother of Tears, as she felt her involvement had been largely ignored in the past. However I believe Dario must finish the trilogy not me. I didn't have the right to encroach on his ideas. The film is now more an *homage* to Dario's work – a tribute to how important I think his role is in contemporary Italian cinema".

Writing THE BLACK CAT

Co-produced by Cozzi and Lucio Lucidi, the $1½ million production was filmed at Rome's De Paolis Studios. Cozzi outlined the story: "The main characters are a film director and his wife, a leading horror actress, who plan to make a sequel to SUSPIRIA. He writes the script, she starts rehearsing the Levana part, and then it seems the Third Mother comes to life in order to stop the project being realised. But when disappearances, murder and occult visions occur, is it reality, a dream, or a nightmare? The script is structured

Directing THE BLACK CAT

like a Philip K. Dick novel. It's about dreams within dreams and the fine line between blurred fantasy and reality. My basic concept was to pattern the story as a thriller incorporating every genre climax one after the other from beginning to end".

The many Argento tributes are reflected by the personnel both in front of and behind the camera, and in the whole tone of the piece, Cozzi said. He should know them off by heart because Cozzi assisted Argento on FIVE DAYS IN MILAN, CREEPERS, OPERA and his panned television game-show 'Giallo'. Urbano Barberini, from OPERA and DEMONS, plays the up-and-coming director. Brett Halsey is the producer found murdered in his mansion who,

Florence Guerin says, 'not today, thank you!'

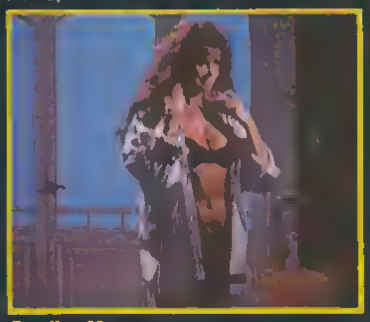
Florence looks into the future

Lovana takes a stab at [illegible] acting

Grave doings

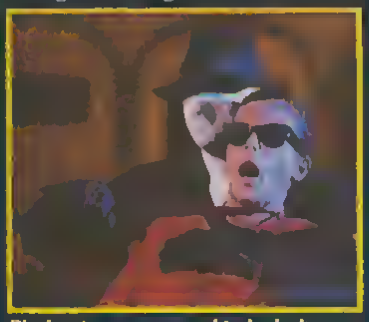
Cozzi directs...

(under the pseudonym Montgomery Ford), starred in TODAY IT'S ME...TOMORROW YOU! one of Argento's earliest western script assignmeots. (Haisey has auddenly resurfaced with a vengeance on the Italian scene. Ha's the star of two new Lucio Fulci films, WHEN ALICE BROKE THE



Caroline Munro

LOOKING GLASS and DEMONIA, and he makes a guest appearance in Coppola'a THE GODFATHER III). Michele Soavl, (Argento alumnus – THE CHURCH and THE SECT directur), plays a gure schlockmeister. And the make-up is by Argento veteran Rosario Prestopino. After Daria Nicoldi refused to play the horror aetress, French star Florence Guurin accepted and uffered a score by Pino Dooaggiu, tha TWO EVIL EYES composer. THE BLACK CAT also features quotations from Cozzl's own back catalogue in the guise of STARCRASH



Black cats are supposed to be lucky...

star Caroline Munro and special effects from that film'a visual director, Armando Yalcauda. Cozzl hopes the primary colour scheme and lighting, all SUSPIRIA based, wou't gu unnoticed either.

"Uollke my former movies THE BLACK CAT has some semblance of a plot

Too many late nights take their toll...

Movie makeup is a cutthroat business!

for a changa", commented Cozzi. "I feel it'a my most accomplished work. It cost a fortune in comparison to my other movies although it was meant to be low-budget in the beginniug. I just went averboard because I added lots more touches when I decided to do things the way I'd written them. Usually I write one script and then

Things are busting out all over...

have to shoot another for cost reasons. Being the co-producer I could finally do what I wrote. Who knows, maybe I'll go broke. But I made THE BLACK CAT for me. I wrote it as a valentine to Dario. It'a mostly my mouey – Golan only gave me a amall advance. It'a exactly what I wanted to make. It's the first time I've doue something the way I always wanted to. And thet'a a risk I knew I had to take to make a movie I could be proud of".

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THE GATE
15
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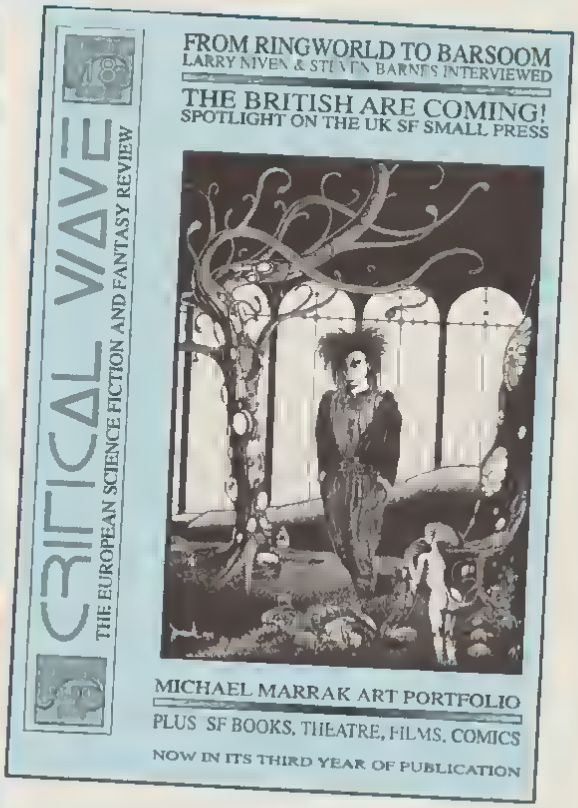
POST MORTEM

If you have something you want to get off your chest, don't be afraid to scream at us about it. Send your bouquets or brickbats to 'Post Mortem,' The Dark Side, Panini House, 116-120 Goswell Road, London EC1.

Dear Dark Side,
I've just read issue one, and I'd like to give you some feedback. I was quite impressed overall – plenty of information, and you don't waste space with full page illustrations. The interviews were entertaining, and you have some good contributors (except I've never liked Stefan Jaworzyn, who has previously – within the pages of SHOCK XPRESS – shown himself to be an obnoxious S.O.B.)
Now what I didn't like:
1)- Occasional childish and fatuous captions to photographs. This is not necessary; leave it to lesser magazines such as GOREZONE.
Why have a computer page? I own a computer, and if I want to know about games I will buy a computer games magazine. I have never met anyone who bought a computer game just because it was horror or SF, like they would see a film.
Yours,
Craig Mitchell,
Metion Park,
Gosforth,
Tyne and Wear.
P.S. Why not have a questionnaire in a later issue to see what your readers think of the mag?

Art by Michael Marrak



We plan to conduct a reader survey very shortly, but the best feedback is from letters such as yours, Craig. Our aim is to make the magazine as wide ranging and info-packed as possible, and obviously there will be columns in it that don't appeal to everyone. However, if it turns out that NOBODY is interested in genre-related computer games then we will get rid of the column in short order and poor old Chris Knight will have had his silicone chips! I personally think it's a subject that needs covering. Let's hear from the rest of you out there. The corny captions are going to stay as well, I'm afraid. You can blame them on a misspent youth watching CARRY ON movies and reading FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND. Finally, Stefan says thanks for the compliment. Just be thankful I didn't let him write the reply to your letter!

Dear Mr Bryce,
It's 10.30 PM on a Tuesday night. The rain has been persistent for four days now. The obligatory Stephen King novel is now finished and tossed to one side. I cross the room and pick up the newly-purchased glossy magazine and sit at the table by the window. Outside, the

howling wind lashes the rain against the window and violently shakes the caravan. I close the curtains, light a large cigar and pour myself a glass of red wine as I prepare to take a trip to The Dark Side.

The layouts are good, the artwork excellent and the interviews straight to the point, not flabby and padded-out. Not sure what kind of age group you're trying to corner with the inclusion of a comic and computer section, however, I only have one real complaint, and that is: please change the competition to a postal one instead of a phone-in because it proves to be more expensive.

The storm has finally ended. The moon hangs high above the distant hills. It is time to go out and find my midnight snack. Have you ever danced with the devil in the pale moonlight?

Steven de Ath,
New Hartley,
Whitley Bay,
Tyne and Wear

Is that really your surname?

Dear Editor,
I would like, if I may, to air a note of thanks to all concerned withthe NIGHTBREED signing at Forbidden Planet on Saturday September 29th. Congratulations to all concerned, and special thanks to Geoff Portass and Little John of Image Imagination, who along with Simon Sayce, Nick Vince and Clive Barker himself were very helpful and made everybody feel that they had time on their hands to chat to us, the fans. All in all, an excellent afternoon out, which, coupled with the Image Imagination display at Tower Records, made it the ideal outing for followers of the work of Clive Barker. It's events like this that earn the genre its well-deserved respect. Thanks again to everyone involved, and a note to Clive: I was the one who had the briefcase artworked; would you please do the other side in November?

K. Walters,
Beckenham,
Kent.

Dear Mr Bryce,
Congratulations on the first issue of THE DARK SIDE, which I was delighted to find in W.H. Smiths alongside FEAR and SKELETON CREW. I was particularly impressed by John Brosnan's 'Prints Of Darkness' section (I like his attitude towards Sword and Sorcery), the Clive Barker interview, and the Hammer Glamour (can't wait for Sybil Danning!) All in all I would say that you have got a good balance, other than your magazine's glaring lack of fiction, and I would venture to say that DARK SIDE is already equally as good as the above-mentioned publications, if not better.

James M. Andertan,
Oxenhope,
West Yorkshire.

Thanks James, you'll notice that we now run a short story every issue, though we don't plan to specialise in fiction – our friends at FEAR do an excellent job in that direction already. Your name sounds awfully familiar. You're not a policeman by any chance...

Dear Mr Bryce,
Firstly, may I say that I think your magazine is fantastic and I intend to buy every one. I will even subscribe when I get enough money. I am only 14, but I am a dedicated horror genre fan. May I suggest that you have a letters page where people can write in and maybe find people who share their interests? It would also provide a source for the reader to take part in and would produce more interest.

Yours faithfully,
Andy Walters,
Nash,
Ludlow,
Shropshire.

Good idea, Andy. Why didn't we think of that?

Dear Allan,
As a director, my main interest has always been in the horror and science-fiction genres, and having read the first issue of THE DARK SIDE, I want to congratulate you and your colleagues on producing an enjoyable, interesting and informative magazine.

I was pleased to note in your introduction that the 'near-legendary' Alan Jones will be a regular contributor. I have always enjoyed reading his articles and reviews, and back in 1978 Alan agreed to play a small part in a film I was directing – TERROR.

Once again, congratulations on an excellent publication and I wish you every success.

All best wishes,
Yours sincerely,
Norman J. Warren,
Shepherd's Bush,
London W6

(Norman also made such popular 70s chillers as INSEMINOID, PREY and SATAN'S SLAVE), and is currently working on a new British-made horror project.

Dear Mr Bryce,
I am most impressed with your new magazine. I find it very informative indeed. I shall definitely be buying it each month. I am an avid horror fan, and love George Romero films, in particular DAY OF THE DEAD. I also enjoy the FRIDAY THE 13TH sagas, along with the NIGHTMARES ON ELM STREET. In truth though, I'll watch anything! I read that you were requesting people to send work in, so I have taken up your challenge.

THE REAPER
Cold and deathly,
Like a shadow from hell,
Or an empty, echoing sepulchre,
Shall ultimately claim all.
For it was put here,
To do one job.
Which it does well.
'Tis always so unfair,
All fear it,
And with good reason.
You can't see it,
Nor smell it,
It could be watching,
You.
It may pass you by,
Sometimes it does not,
Even science admits defeat,
Medicine is useless,
When it wants you,
It gets you.
Pleading is useless,
Because it has no mercy,
It has many names,
But all of them are cruel,
One of them is The Reaper.'

Everyone seems to prefer my poems to my stories, although a couple of years ago I had a story published in the school mag. I am 15 years old and in the 'A' stream for English, and my teacher keeps complaining that all the essays I hand in are horror ones!

Keep up the good work,
Yours sincerely,
Laura Craig,
Chesstown,
Walsall.

Nice work, Laura. What school do you go to – Stronge Hill?

Just space to mention a few fanzines that have arrived on our desk recently. FLASHBACK issue 1 is a 30 page non-illustrated booklet which looks at the films of James (ALIENS, THE TERMINATOR) Cameron, and presents critical re-evaluations of THE HITCHER and DELIVERANCE. Editor, writer, typist and teamaker is young Philip Batey, and he hasn't done a bad job – at least it's intelligently written. Buy this one and he might be able to afford some pics next time out. Copies can be obtained for £1 each from 10 Hollies Street, Pensnett, Brierley Hill, West Midlands DY5 4HT.
CRITICAL WAVE is a splendidly professional zine which covers the European SF and fantasy scene. Issue 18 contains interviews with Larry Niven and Steven Barnes, and a valuable roundup of forthcoming science fiction and horror conventions. There's also a lot of good, informed writing about books, films and comics etc, and some stylish art from Michael Marrak. A bargain for £1.50. It's a bi-monthly publication and is available from 24A Beech Road, Bowes Park, London.
Lastly comes PRIME GOTHIC, the journal of the newly formed International Horror Film Collectors Club. This is a slim booklet containing short articles on Cannibal pics and 'Mondo Movies' (real life shockumentaries in case you didn't know). But its real purpose is to print lengthy lists of video titles that the members have for sale or purchase. If you want to get in on this vast video-swapping network (involving only legally certificated titles, of course!), then write to Jon Rose at Pluto Enterprises, 27 Old Gloucester Street, London WC1N 3XX.

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WEREWOLF

Jon Abbott explores the hairiest horror show on television

In a nson-lit hotsl room, a grim bounty hunter solemnly loads his rifle with silver bullets. Elsewhsre, tssnagsr Eric Cord sits mystified and frightsned as he watches his best friend's sanity sssmingly slipping away. He's been asked to sit up with him all night, whils kssping blm firmly tied up. When ths changs occurs, hs tells Cord, If you're my friend – shoot ms.

A few hours later, as a full moon bathes his anguished frisnd, Eric Cord no longsr fears for his colleague's sanity. Hs fsars for his own.

Werewolf is a grim, dark borror sbow from tbs Fox TV nstwork in Amsrica, shot in cinsmatic tradition. Thess are tense moments from the scene-setting pilot, originally released on vidso in ths UK. This splendid manipulative opsnsr sets ths scens and sstablishss ths premise for the even tighter, moodisr half-hour dremas that are now part of ths innovativs new TV ssason on Sky TV, wbsrs it's airing alongslds *Alien Nation*, *Star Trsk*, *Wiseguy* and *The Simpsons* et el...

Admittsdly Sky TV is not as accessible to everybody as regular TV, but at ths risk of sounding like a saiesman, it's wsll worth looking into if you're a TV buff, film fan or fantasy snthuslast. Ths Sky ssrvice comes with all the othsr advantsgss of satellite TV, and is run by some of the most sensible people I've ever met in TV. Ssriss ars shown in ths correct running order, and the only cuts in the films are those the law insists on, not soms panicky, self-rightsous moral guardian. Their shows are on at accessible audisnce-friendly times, too. It would never have sven occurrsd to ITV to run *Alien Nation* in peak-time, and *Werewolf* runs at 10.30. on Tuesday nights. If it had aired on ITV, it would have gons out irregularly in ths middls of the night, with more cuts in it than one of Skorzeny's victims!

EPISODE GUIDE

As *Werewolf* episodes are only half-hour shows, to give a one-lins plot dsscription is to blow half ths storylins... so I'vs listed the thsms of ths episode to idsntify it, rathsr than reveal too much of the story.

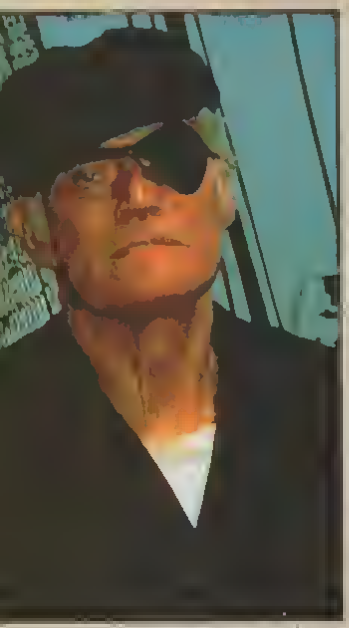
Pilot

wr. Frank Lupo, dir. David Hemmings.

Cord acquires ths curss; hunts down Skorzeny; Alamo Joe bsgins his pursuit.

With John J. York, Lance Le Gault, Chuck Connors, Raphasl Sbarge, Michelle Johnson, Stanisy Grover, Robert Krantz, Toni Attsll, Jossph Whipp, Gail O'Gredy, Linden Ashby.

Ssries episodss are listsd in order of broadcast.



'I hate those 3D movies!'

Night Watch
wr. Frank Lupo, dir. Daivd Hemmings.
Cord continues his pursuit of Skorzeny. with Le Gault, Connors, Michelle Johnson, Henry Beckman, Grand Bush, Denny Miiier, John Garwood.

The Boy Who Cried Werewolf
wr. Mark Jones, dir. Larry Shaw.
Monater-crazy kid and woman-beater meet the wolf. with Le Gault, Danny Cooksey, Cyril O'Reiliy, Anne Wyndham, Len Wayland, Matt Roe.

The Black Ship
wr. Cole & Bunch, dir. David Hemmings.
Crazy old aea captain; with Le Gault, Connors, Stefan Gieraach, Wayne Grace, Liiiian Garrett.

Spectre Of The Wolf
wr. Craig Tepper, dir. Lyn[illegible] Chubbuck.
College professor lectu[illegible]s on lycanthrophy; with Le Gault, Byrne Piven, Paul Comi, Julie Inouye, Jay Wakeman, Ga[illegible] Kluger, Thomas Stoviak, [illegible]garet Nagei.

The Wolf Who Thought He Was A Man
wr. Cole & Bunch, dir. David Hemmings.
Bogus werewolf; with Tony Mockus, Tobiaa Andersen, Noel Conion, Stuart Wiison Turner, Bobbie Eakes.

WEREWOLF – A bad moon r[illegible]

Friendly Haven
wr. Tom Biomquist, [illegible]id Hemmings.
Into "Bigfoot [illegible]": with Le Gault, Co[illegible], Bibi Osterwald, Da[illegible] Greer, Sunshine Parker, [illegible]n C Anders, Da[illegible] Bry[illegible] Cartmell, James [illegible]t[illegible]n, Burr Middlet[illegible]

Let Us Pra[illegible]
wr. Cole & [illegible]unch, dir. James Darren.
Mona[illegible]ery; with Le Gault, Kenn[illegible] Kimmins, David Crowley, [illegible]ei Carter, Stephen Burn[illegible] Bert Santos.

A World Of Dif[illegible]nce (Part One)
wr. Crsig Te[illegible]r. James Darren.
Cord cap[illegible]; with Le Gault, James [illegible]riaon, Lee De Broux, Ther[illegible] Saldana, Gewn Humbi[illegible]nden Chiles, Ethan Phil[illegible], David Froman, David [illegible]owgiii.

A World O[illegible]erence (Part T[illegible])
wr. Cr[illegible]per, dir. James Da[illegible]
[illegible]be accused of murd[illegible] [illegible] as Part One.

The Unicorn
wr. Mark Jon[illegible] Larry Bowman.
Prostit[illegible] murders; with Le Gaul[illegible]i Lin, Tony Todd, Ri[illegible]mwait, Freeman King.

All Hallow's Eve
wr. Craig Tepper, dir. Larry Shaw.
Special epiaode, aired in [illegible] on Hallowe'eni with Walt[illegible]dison, Bob Ari, Cami [illegible]er, Sean Kanan, Jim Cal[illegible].

Blood On T[illegible] Tracks
wr. Christian [illegible]en, dir. Rob Bowman.
with Le G[illegible]t, Everett McGill, Jason [illegible] Tyler Tyhurst T.J. [illegible]la, Elizabeth Rusci[illegible]uis Contreras, Jim [illegible]

Nightmares At The Braine Hotel
wr. Craig Tepper, di[illegible]vid Hemmings
Sleazy hotel; w[illegible] Gault, Connors, Ri[illegible]ynch, Elien Crawford, [illegible]ard Mungo, Jayne [illegible]

W[illegible]unt
[illegible]oie & Bunch, dir. Bob [illegible]lver.
[illegible]he-wolf; with George M[illegible]aniel, R.G. Armstrong, [illegible]quin Martinez.

Blood Ties
wr. Christian Darren, dir. Lyndon Chubbuck.
Murder plot with Catherine Hickland, Peg Steward, James Horan, Joseph Whipp, Larry Friel.

Alamo Joe

Lance Le Gault

Big Daddy
wr. Cole & Bunch, dir. Lerry Shaw.
Deep South story; with Howard Duff, Brian Libby, Jonelle Allen.

Killer At Large
wr. Tom Blomquist, dir. Sidney Hayers.
Murdery mystery; with Le Gault, Armors, David Hayward, Leon Rippy, Sandy Ignon, Allen Williams, Shane Pinkham, Robin Greer, Lori Lethin.

Spectre Of The Wolf
wr. Craig Tanner, dir. Lyndon Chubbuck.
College professor; with Le Gault, Byrne Piven, Paul Coml, Julie Inouye, Jay Wakeman, Gary Kluger, Thomas Stoviak, Margaret Nagel.

Nightmare In Blue
wr. Cole & Bunch, dir. David Hemmings.
Buried alive; with Le Gault, Gregg Henry, Mike Gomez, Terry Wills, Toni Byrd.

Sinkwalker
wr. Christian Darren, dir. David Hemming.
Every series has a "noble indians" story sooner or later, and here it is; with Le Gault, Jimmie F. Skaggs, Henry Kingi, Patrick Bishop, Dehl Berti (of course), Don Shanks, Gloria Hayes.

King Of The Road
wr. Cole & Bunch, dir. James Darren.
Hoboa; with Le Gault, Guy Stockwell, Henry Beckman, Marco Rodriguez, Tony Fields, sid Haig.

Wolves in the fold

A Material Girl
wr. Cole & Bunch, dir. James Darren.
Teenage murders; with Le Gault, Lisanne Falk, Noah Blake, Stuart Fratkin.

To Dream Of Wolves (Part One)
wr. Cole & Bunch, dir. David Hemmings.
Skorzeny written out; with Le Gault, Brian Thompson (as Nicholas Remy), Kim Ulrich.

To Dream Of Wolves (Part Two)
wr. Cole & Bunch, dir. James Darren.
(cast as Part One).

Blind Luck
wr. Dennis Foley, dir. John Pare.
Blind woman; with Le Gault, Cheryl McManus, Marshall Teague, April Giuffria.

Gray Wolf
wr. Norman Spinrad, dir. James Darren.
What's worse than one werewolf?; with Le Gault, Morgan Sheppard, Larry Drake, Brian Thompson (as Remy).

Amazing Grace
wr. Cole & Bunch, dir. David Hemmings.
Crazy lady spots werewolf; with Le Gault, Billie Bird, Eileen Barnett, J. Patrick McNamara.

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SVHW 0008

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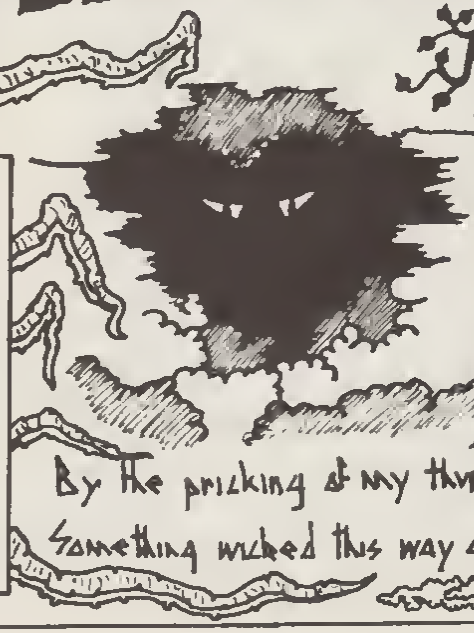

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VIDEO VAULT

The door to the video vault creaks open. The Dark Side tunes in to the latest in TV terror.

Key to the ratings:
★★★★ excellent
★★★ good
★★ mediocre
★ poor

A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET: THE DREAM CHILD

CBS FOX Video

★★

The latest instalment in the never-ending saga of Freddy Krueger (Robert Englund) finds our unfriendly pizza-faced jokester once more invading the dreams of Alice (Lisa Wilcox) the heroine of the previous movie (despite the fact that she apparently learned to control her subconscious and effectively block him out) One of Wilcox's most frightening visions is a potted version of evil Englund s conception as the 'bastard son of a thousand maniacs – when a nun is accidentally locked in an asylum with a bunch of drooling psychos she is gang-raped and later gives birth to a grotesque child with the face like Freddy the Kl

Back in reality-land Wilcox s pals start to meet with grisly accidents her boyfriend (Danny Hassel) is killed in a car crash after dreaming he is an a motorcycle that suddenly melts into his body turning him into a macabre H R Giver-like amalgam of man and machine Of course Wilcox knows that Freddy is responsible and when she discovers she is pregnant she instinctively realises that the evil Englund has re-entered the scene through her unborn foetus dreams After considering an abortion she decides against it, and prepares to do battle with Freddy once more this time for the life of her child

An interesting concept (that of an unborn child able to channel its nightmares to its mother) lurks at the heart of this movie but a small army of writers have been unable to fully realise its potential Instead we have yet another collection of cleverly realised nightmare sequences strung together by the thinnest of plots Director Stephen Hopkins (a talented newcomer who also made the Aussie chiller DANGEROUS GAME) does an imaginative job in visualising the bizarre dream sequences particularly the surrealistic climactic chase on a maze of staircases It s also good to see that the character of Freddy has got back some of the evil edge he lost in the previous episode Hopkins cuts down Freddy s appearances thus making him more scary when he does show up Not as gory as some this is nevertheless one of the better ELM STREET flicks and keeps the series way ahead on points of its moronic FRIDAY THE 13TH rivals

Certificate 18. Running Time: 90 minutes.

A.B.

THE WITCHES

Warner Home Video

★★★½

Nothing could be more surprising than to see Nicolas Roeg produce a delightful children's fairytale – even if it does contain scenes guaranteed to turn the little darlings into gibbering wrecks I con t envisage it withstanding rigorous structuralistic analysis but if you have small children and feel scaring the

bejesus out of them it's ideal (If you have no small children to hand you can always imitate one – you may not even have to try too hard) Be that as it may, what we have here is a thoroughly enjoyable rampage through Roald Dahl's novel and don t come crying to me if you re a Why did he change page 23? purist – a director's craft is to work his own personal vision in with the source material – it says '*Based on* an the book after all (my italics)

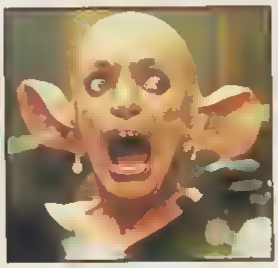
Anjelica Huston plays the fabulously wicked Queen of All Witches who seeks to turn England's tmies into mice, if for no other reason than that small children smell like dog doody to the average witch Fair enough She is hampered in her attempts by the already rodentised Luke (Jasen Fisher) and his cuddly Grandma (Mai Zetterling, director of SCRUBBERS) Also present in the cast is Rowan Atkinson (genuinely funny) and many instantly recognisable faces from British TV none of whom I recognised

THE WITCHES contains just the right mixture of fantasy sentiment and horror to make a good kiddies picture There s a wonderfully atmospheric Norwegian prologue the larger than life characters stay well away from pantomime level travesty (although there was an article in

The Independent written by a witch accusing the film of, um *witchism!*) and Roeg shows himself equally adept at creating humour and menace alike. Occasional dodgy effects and the cop-out ending may agitate some 'adults', but gnpers and FX bores aren't the target audience. THE WITCHES is, for once, great fun for all the family! Really!
Certificate PG. Running Time: 90 minutes.
S.J.

DARK ANGEL
Entertainment In Video
***

Dolph Lundgren takes on drug-dealers from outer space in a lively, stunt-filled action movie for the He-Man crowd that borrows heavily from THE HIDDEN, ALIEN NATION and PREDATOR. Blonde blue-eyed Dolph plays rousled Houston cop Jack Caine and joins forces with an inept 'Jimmy Olsen' type FBI agent (Brian Benben) to investigate a series of bizarre slayings which have been accomplished with an alien device like a razor-sharp CD able to home in on the victim's electrical impulses ('it's like tuning your radio dial to KILL')



After a great deal of mayhem, it becomes apparent that the compact disc killer is an extra-terrestrial baddie named Telec (Matthias Hues), who injects humans with fatal doses of heroin then spikes their brains for retrieve a serum that can be used as an ultra-powerful drug on his home planet. In pursuit of Telec is an alien cop, armed with a weapon of devastating firepower. But he is mortally wounded by his nemesis, and in the end it is up to Dolph to save

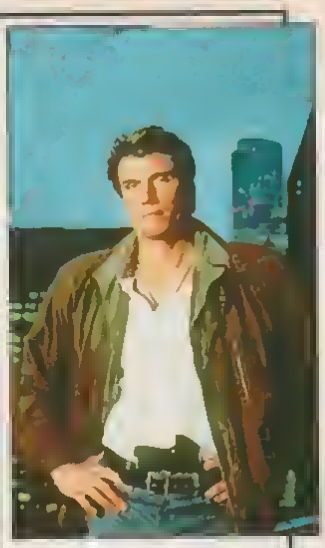
the day.

A lot of the action is overly repetitive (much screen time is given to detailing the alien's grisly drug-extraction routine), and though Dolph does okay, he doesn't carry off the script's regulation quota of dreadful puns as skilfully as the great Arnie would have done. But performances don't count for much anyway in what is basically a spectacular by-the-numbers comic-book action movie, efficiently directed by former stunt co-ordinator Craig 'ACTION JACKSON' Baxley, who provides a great deal of employment for his stuntman buddies: hardly a minute goes by without cars/buildings being blown up or people being shot and crashing through windows in slow-motion. It may be dumb, but it's eventful.
Certificate 18. Running Time: 89 minutes.
R.M.

UPWORLD
Vestron Video
***

Special effects wizard Stan Winston made his directorial debut two years ago with the underrated chiller PUMPKINHEAD (released in the UK as VENGEANCE – THE DEMON). Now he follows it up with this equally assured PG-rated fantasy, starring a bizarre-looking three foot tall creature with a skin like tree bark and a fondness for eating cardboard. He is Gnorm the gnome (The 'G' is not silent in either case!) a marvellous piece of mechanical wizardry created in the Winston workshops and operated by a vast entourage of effects men. At least it will save them money on salary demands for the sequel.

The film's human hero is an unorthodox Los Angeles cop named Casey, played in a pleasantly funky fashion by teen favourite Anthony Michael Hall. Casey is posing as a crooked diamond dealer on a clandestine late night meeting in a city park, when he is knocked unconscious. The only witness to this is Gnorm, who has popped up through the ground on a rare visit to 'Upworld' to revitalise a



special light-giving stone called a lumin'. An explosion then kills the informer that Casey went there to meet, and the blast tears the lumin from Gnorm's hand. Casey finds it. Gnorm tries to steal it back, and the two begrudgingly join together in an unusual buddy-buddy alliance to take on the bad guys.

The first half of the movie is really rather splendid, cleverly balancing comedy and fantasy with some well-staged action sequences. The script (co-written by Pen Densham, who made THE KISS) does tend to run out of steam later on, but the movie is never less than extremely entertaining throughout, and Winston's technical and visual skill as a filmmaker (learned doing second unit work on ALIENS and THE TERMINATOR) is apparent in every frame. The main asset here is Gnorm himself, a remarkable cross between E.T. and a Gremlin, who comes across as more real than most of the humans in the cast. UPWORLD is as original and amusing a kiddie fantasy as one could wish for and it certainly doesn't deserve the ignominious fate of being released directly to video.
Certificate PG. Running Time: 86 minutes.
A.B.

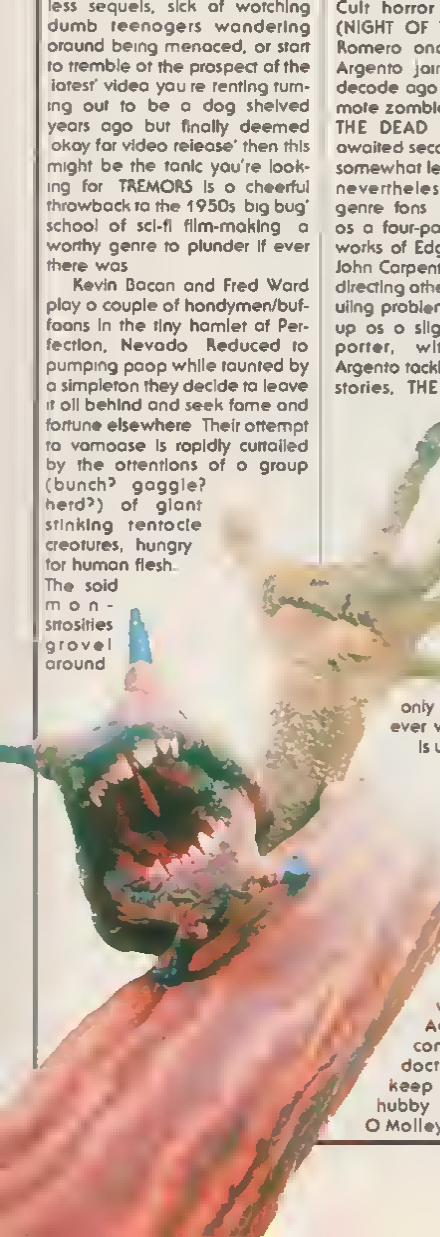
TREMORS
CIC Video
***½

If you're depressed by Hollywood's tendency towards pointless sequels, sick of watching dumb teenagers wandering around being menaced, or start to tremble at the prospect of the 'latest' video you're renting turning out to be a dog shelved years ago but finally deemed 'okay for video release' then this might be the tonic you're looking for. TREMORS is a cheerful throwback to the 1950s 'big bug' school of sci-fi film-making, a worthy genre to plunder if ever there was.

Kevin Bacon and Fred Ward play a couple of handymen/buffoons in the tiny hamlet of Perfection, Nevada. Reduced to pumping poop while taunted by a simpleton they decide to leave it all behind and seek fame and fortune elsewhere. Their attempt to vamoose is rapidly curtailed by the attentions of a group (bunch? gaggle? herd?) of giant stinking tentacle creatures, hungry for human flesh. The said monstrosities grovel around underground until attracted by vibrations then move in to put the bite on their victims.

By today's standards TREMORS is a minor classic. It speeds along relentlessly while introducing its cast of eccentric characters, contains plenty of monsters, some good shocks and – perhaps most importantly – has no shortage of wit, dialogue is snappy, humourous and thankfully devoid of endless monster-movie references. Overall TREMORS is basically great entertainment and inhabits a blockhead-free zone occupied by too few recent genre releases. Enough said.

Certificate 15. Running Time: 96 minutes.
S.J.



TWO EVIL EYES
Medusa Home Video
***

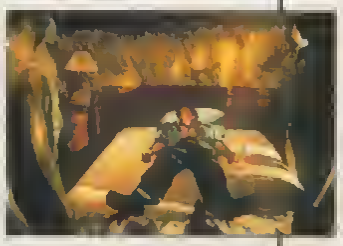
Cult horror directors George (NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD) Romero and Dario (SUSPIRIA) Argento joined forces over a decade ago to bring us the ultimate zombie movie DAWN OF THE DEAD. This, their long-awaited second collaboration, is somewhat less impressive but is nevertheless a must-see for genre fans. Originally planned as a four-part 'hamage' to the works of Edgar Allan Poe (with John Carpenter and Clive Barker directing other episodes), scheduling problems caused it to end up as a slightly overlong two-parter, with Romero and Argento tackling the familiar Poe stories, THE BLACK CAT and THE FACTS IN THE CASE OF M. VALDEMAR.

Romero's VALDEMAR is surprisingly slow-moving when you consider the fact that it's the only zombie story Poe ever wrote (and George is usually pretty hot on that particular subject). Roger Corman successfully tackled this yarn in period as one of his TALES OF TERROR (1963), but here it's updated to the modern times, with adulterous Adrienne Barbeau conspiring with her doctor boyfriend to keep her terminally ill hubby Valdemar (Bingo O'Malley) alive long enough to cheat him out of all his lolly. They hypnotise him into signing his life away but the nefarious pair don't count on the fact that the hypnotic trance will last long after Valdemar has left the land of the living.

Curiously lacking in genuine chills but for one brief sequence near the end where the zombified Valdemar returns for his revenge, this is a great disappointment from a director of Romero's proven ability. We have already seen in CREEPSHOW and his abortive TV shows TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE that

the short format doesn't really suit his talents, and this looks for all the world like a dreary, clichéd episode of the latter series bolstered by a few modest Tom Savini gore effects. Romero's original choice of MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH would undoubtedly have been a lot more fun.

But things perk up for the Argento adaptation of THE BLACK CAT, which really IS another story altogether. This opens with barmy photographer Rod Usher (Harvey Keitel) enthusiastically photographing the corpse of a naked woman who has been sliced in two at the waist by a razor-sharp pendulum. Rod is a crime photographer who obviously enjoys his work to the extent that he takes it home with him, chopping up his violinist girlfriend (Madeleine Potter) with a meat cleaver and stuffing her corpse behind a false wall in her apartment. The Black Cat of the title represents what little conscience our Rod possesses. It's a



sinister beast that bears an unusual birthmark in the shape of a hangman's noose. Rod strangles it and records its death throes for posterity in his latest bestseller, 'Metropolitan Horrors'. But of course it returns from the grave to exact an ironic retribution.

The storyline may be familiar, but it's distinguished by good performances from Keitel and John Amos (who plays the jaded cop who finally finds nutty Rod out) and Argento's compelling

directorial style, which is characteristically stylish and on-target throughout. Extremely grisly at times, with a guest appearance from makeup maestro Tom Savini – as a loony who has pulled out all his girlfriend's teeth! It's a lurid mini-masterpiece of gothic terror that Argento fans will not want to miss.

Certificate 18. Running Time: 115 minutes.
N.T.

RETURN OF THE FAMILY MAN

MGM/UA Video

***

A bland title hides an impressive little stalk and slash epic that owes more than a nod of familiarity to THE STEPFATHER. The 'Family Man' is a sadistic Ed Gein type psycho described by one character as, 'the biggest son-of-a-bitchin-mass murderer in the Pacific South West.' He immediately lives up to his reputation in the opening scenes, escaping from a prison bus by poking a guard's eyes out, and systematically slaughtering everyone else on board – including his fellow prisoners. Then he heads back to the town of his birth, where he gets very angry to discover that his family home has been taken over by an ill-assorted group of teen campers. If you can't guess what comes next, then you should take a crash course in FRIDAY THE 13TH movies.

Chillingly well played by Ron Smerczak. The Family Man himself is a memorable creation, cheerfully shrugging 'Sorry, neighbour' to a chap he has just disembowelled with a broken bottle! The script even manages to offer a believable psychological explanation for his anti-social behaviour and presents us with as likeable a bunch of teen protagonists as we've had in years, carefully developing each individual character so we'll care about what happens to them when the killing begins in earnest (which in a remarkable example of the slow buildup is not until the second half of the picture). The film betrays its low budget in its grainy camerawork and the amateur nature of a couple of the performances, but stick with it through a slow first half you'll be rewarded with a tension-packed finale where the teens prove surprisingly resourceful in avoiding those body bags (aided by a cylinder of propane and a talking Polaroid camera!). Atmospheric, exciting and threaded through with welcome streak of black humour, it manages to bring new blood to an overworked genre.

Certificate 18. Running Time: 88 minutes.

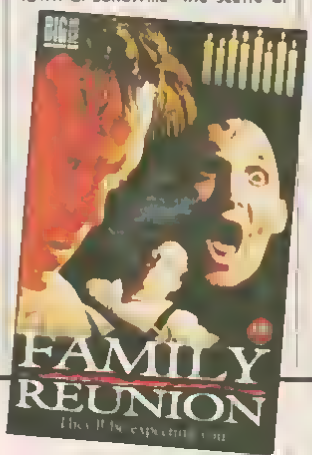
R.M.

FAMILY REUNION

Big Pictures

**

Forty years ago, Henry Andrews rescued his son Tom (Michael Novak) from the hands of a satanic cult intent on sacrificing him to the devil – blowing away 13 (count 'em!) devil worshippers with a shotgun. Flash forward to the present day and Tom is all grown up with a white-bread family of his own, but for some mysterious reason he feels compelled to visit the small desert town of Sutterville, the scene of his attempted murder all those years ago. Grandad Henry wonders, is this trip really necessary, particularly as they are arriving on Christmas Eve – the exact anniversary of the witche's sacrifice.

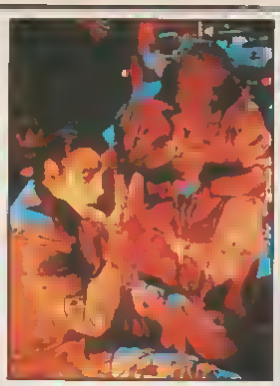


After an atmospheric monochrome prologue (reminiscent of CITY OF THE DEAD), this routine supernatural chiller settles down to tell a familiar story of small-town devil-worship which benefits from the presence of the late great biker-movie director and actor Jack Starrett reprising his FIRST BLOOD role of a trigger-happy redneck sheriff who enjoys spitting out such cherishable lines as 'Move one inch and I'll feed your liver to my cat!'

At first this brings back memories of the splendid RACE WITH THE DEVIL, which Starrett directed and had a cameo role in, but FAMILY REUNION isn't in the same creepy class. It's thoroughly routine spook stuff, built around the hero's confrontation with a satanic bad guy who can cause OMEN-type accidents and shrug off bullets like confetti, but is just stupid enough to succumb to the old cross-through-the-heart gag. The effects are not so special, characterisation, plot, and performances are strictly par for the course, and like any other reunion, we've seen it all too many times before.

Certificate 18. Running Time: 85 minutes.

R.M.



DEAD MEN DON'T DIE

New World/Transatlantic Pictures

*

Barry Barron (Elliott Gould) is the evening news anchor man on W.W.N. (World Wide News) and he has just uncoverd a multi-million dollar cocaine operation. Catching the criminals in the act is just the kind of scoop he's been dying to get, but he really does die to get it, because they shoot him full of holes and leave his corpse in an underground car park. However, that's not the end of the story, because along comes Chafuko (Mabel King), the neighbourhood apprentice voodoo high priestess who has been waiting for the opportunity to create her very own zombie slave. She brings Barry back to life, and puts him back on the air – upsetting both his murderers and the station sponsors.

The best thing about this awesomely dreadful zombie spoof is that it only lasts 84 minutes. We all know zombies can be funny – Ronnie Reagan kept us entertained for years – but this living dead Dodo plods along with all the urgency of an appearance in traffic court. Elliott Gould dons white-face makeup and mugs it up for all he's worth, which sadly doesn't seem to be a lot nowadays, and the level of humour is pitched so low that even the Three Stooges wouldn't be able to limbo dance under it. For insomniacs only.

Certificate 15. Running Time: 84 minutes.

R.M.

This month's reviewers are: Alan Bryce, Stefan Jaworzyn, Richard Marshall and Norman Taylor. ●

Our cool yule ghoul Hadria Hemlock gazes into her crystal ball to see what scares Santa Claws has in store. Slayride anybody?

horrorScope

ARIES
21st Mar – 19th April

Your craziest dreams come true this month. An elderly aunt or uncle could cause worry. You're attracted to the outdoors more than usual, so button up warm and remember the old adage. It isn't the cough that carries you off, but the coffin they carries you off in...

TAURUS
20th April – 20th May

Health worries about brothers or sisters could keep you awake. Be careful of jealousy, and watch your spending. You set yourself up as judge and jury. Try not to be the executioner as well – leave some few for the others!

GEMINI
21st May – 21st June

You want it all this month, but can't manage without the help of partners. Keep a low profile in business matters, and don't sign anything – especially in blood – after the 14th. You'll be flushed with determination on the 24th, and this is a good time to kick a bad habit. Just watch it doesn't kick back.

CANCER
22nd June – 22nd July

You feel like making a change in your looks this month – that mad pack a on improvement for a start! Be systematic, or the work will start to pile up around you. The full moon on the 2nd could send you into a murky mood – batty, even..

LEO
23rd July – 22nd Aug

Passion, intrigue and over indulgence mark the first week of the month. Live now, pay later is your motto. Tread carefully or you'll lose your heart – not literally I hope, but you never know...

VIRGO
23rd Aug – 22nd Sept

The full moon on the 2nd could bring news of an ambition realised, carrying new pride and prestige into your life. The second part of the month brings a desire to renovate – so chuck out those old spider webs and get some new ones in.

LIBRA
23rd Sept – 22nd Oct

Take plenty of iron this month, you'll not want to be anemic or run down with all those Christmas festivities looming. A very busy time indeed, particularly after the 18th, when you would be well advised to follow a hunch – just like Quasimodo...

SCORPIO
23rd Oct – 21st Nov

Self preservation is everything this month. You will spend a lot of time guarding your secret wealth. But remember what happened to old Ebenezer Scrooge and be a bit generous to those less fortunate. I could do with a new broomstick, and Freddy would love a manicure!

SAGITTARIUS
22nd Nov – 21st Dec

You're looking good this month, restless and optimistic, with a real zest for life. Partners won't be able to keep up with you, and they may complain about your spendthrift ways. Watch out for hidden enemies on the 5th, especially if you're planning to go swimming in the Black Lagoon.

CAPRICORN
22nd Dec – 19th Jan

Bad habits could cause domestic upheaval this month. Nip them in the bud before it is too late. Be careful of fierce animals – particularly the ones that are two hundred feet tall and answer to the name of Godzilla. The end of the month will bring new energy.

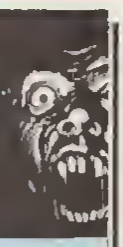
AQUARIUS
20th Jan – 18th Feb

You may face problems with fines or taxes this month (just like poor old Vlad the Impaler, who still refuses to pay his pole tax). You are brusque and unpredictable, with lots on your mind. An idea formulated on the 10th should not be talked about or put into operation until the 18th.

PISCES
19th Feb – 20th March

An ambition could be realised on the 23rd, bringing honour and financial gain. You will be quite a menace this month – the talk of the graveyard in fact. Visitors will drop in for a bit and stay for a feast, which sounds all too familiar in this neck of the woods...

COMING NEXT MONTH!



Devil doll Chucky's back, and we've got him! Next month Maitland McDonagh files her exclusive report from behind the scenes on the $12 million CHILD'S PLAY II and talks to the film's writer and director John Lafia about the problems of working with the screen's most memorable pint-sized menace (with apologies to Bonnie Langford). We also meet Abel Ferrara, notorious director and star of that famed DIY horror hit, DRILLER KILLER. This guy rarely gives interviews, and when you read this one you will see why! On the television front we'll be asking you to step into THE TWILIGHT ZONE, and take a glimpse into the macabre mind of that splendid writer Nigel Kneale, who will be discussing his immortal creation, Professor Bernard Quatermass. And if you've ever fancied making your own horror movie then you mustn't miss out on the first part of our exciting new competition aimed at discovering the fear filmmakers of tomorrow. Budding George Romero's take heed – this could be your big break! There will also be an exclusive picture preview of Michele Soavi's dazzling supernatural chiller, THE SECT, hot gossip from the set of Tom Savini's remake of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, plus lots more ghoulish news, reviews and previews from the darker side of films, video, comics, books and computer games. The January issue of THE DARK SIDE will be on sale in your local newsagent from December 20th – get it before it gets YOU!

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SATELLITE SHOCKS

Jon Abbot previews some ghoultide treats

Terrestrial TV Channels were still tight-lipped about their Christmas schedules as we went to press but details of some intriguing horror highlights and fantasy events on the satellite services were starting to flitter in

The Christmas film on Sky Movies will be *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, the colourful tribute to the golden years of animated cartoons that features extraordinary special effects tricks and cameo appearances by countless Disney and Warners stars If you haven't seen it, watch out for a spectacular nightclub scene with penguin waiters Tex Avery dames and a piano duet between Daffy and Donald Duck ("Thath the latht time I work with anyone with a sthpeech impedimenti") Other fantasy films lined up for December include *Cocoon The Return* *Mad Max – Beyond Thunderdome* and the 1980s comeback of that slithering superstar *The Blob!*

Gilliam's Munchausen

Over at BSB, they're contemplating another *Doctor Who* extravaganza which will be a week of specially selected episodes (not 24 hours a day this time natch!) Main attraction for DARK SIDE readers will surely be a toss-up between the Terry Gilliam double-bill on Christmas Day and the Movie Channel s Alternative Christmas This latter event consists of a chronological one-a-night screening of the entire *Friday the 13th* series from Parts Two to Seven, from the 10th to the 15th of December (well they did say it was an alternative Christmas!)

The Terry Gilliam double-bill consists of that spectacular money-muncher *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* and the wacky *Time Bandits* fantasy starring David Rappaport and various Monty Pythons Just for the record, they're accompanied by the Fawlty-ish *A Fish Called Wanda* and the appropriately Pythonesque sight of the British establishment in disarray in *Scandal*

Other Christmas fantasy films on BSB over December will include the bizarre *Scrooged* with Bill Murray *My Stepmother Is An Alien* with Dan Aykroyd and Kim Basinger *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* with Mel Smith and Stephanie Beacham the animated *An American Tail* and *Jaws – The Revenge* pencilled in for December 20th and *Poltergeist III* on the 16th

Also on the Astra system along with the Sky services is WH Smith s Lifestyle channel which has a couple of interesting additions from the fantasy arena lined up for December (they're already running the vintage anthology series *One Step Beyond*, by the way) The 1950 s series *Rocky Jones, Space Ranger* will be running on Sundays in a 4 00

Wolves of Willoughby Chase

slot for 23 episodes, and follows in the footsteps of such previous Lifestyle screenings as *Space Patrol* and *Tom Corbett* Somewhat more recent is the little-seen *Captain Power And His Soldiers Of The Future*, which was the live-action series that spawned all the fuss about 'inter-active' toys a couple of years ago it won't be "inter-active" on Lifestyle but apparently it s quite good visually, one of a number of syndicated sci-fi/fantasy shows that has done the rounds in the U S

Dan and Kim get hitched

Captain Power begins on December 23rd

Terrestrial TV briefly The recent short-lived sci-fi series *Hard Time On Planet Earth*, starring toughie Martin Kove as an alien convict sentenced to "life on Earth' is currently doing the ITV regional roundabout It could show up any time from two in the afternoon to two in the morning, but it's out there! Also on the subject of the ITV regions, the licensing period for *The Time Tunnel* is rapidly running out so if your area isn't running it by now it might never The good news is that it has now been picked up by Channel Four, so everybody will get a chance to see it eventually In the meantime wouldya settle for *Voyage To The Bottom Of The Sea* on C4 and from the start? Thought so i

Scrooged

Happy Xmas from Sky!

Mac and guess who?

CINEMACABRE

There's something stirring in the sewers... Alan Frank comes out of his shell to tell us about it!

The Green Party

These days there are pressure groups out to sell the merits of every possible segment of society, so I've no doubt that somewhere there is a body known as "Call Rats Attractive People' (C.R.A.P.) whose job it is to counteract the inevitably villainous image of rodents in the media.

C.R.A.P. should be delighted with *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (PG) since it features a truly delightful elderly four-foot-high talking rat, who serves as the wise mentor of the legendary sewer-dwelling, pizza-guzzling, Martial Arts expert reptiles, whose $12 million cinema debut brought in an amazing $25.4 million on its opening weekend in America.

The late Jim Henson earns high praise for creating the marvellous animatronic rat whom I found to be by far the most interesting character in the film. The humans are mere ciphers designed to advance the plot from one Turtle encounter of the bone-snapping kind to the next. The furry teacher is far more memorable than nominal heroes Rafael, Michelangelo, Donatello and Leonardo. They're an amiable-enough bunch with a smart line in hip street-talking slang and are undoubtedly good to have around when you're in trouble. But in the final analysis they simply emerge as men in Turtle suits which must have been sweaty hell for the actors trapped inside them.

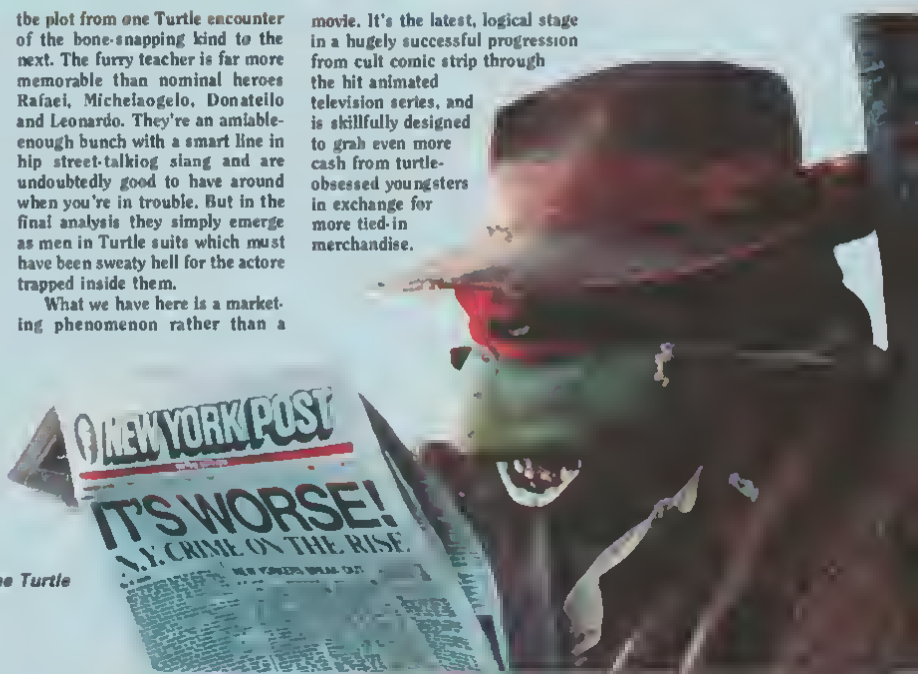
What we have here is a marketing phenomenon rather than a movie. It's the latest, logical stage in a hugely successful progression from cult comic strip through the hit animated television series, and is skillfully designed to grab even more cash from turtle-obsessed youngsters in exchange for more tied-in merchandise.

As a sales promotion aid it's a hit. The film is a 93-minute-long advertisement for all kinds of Turtle goodies.

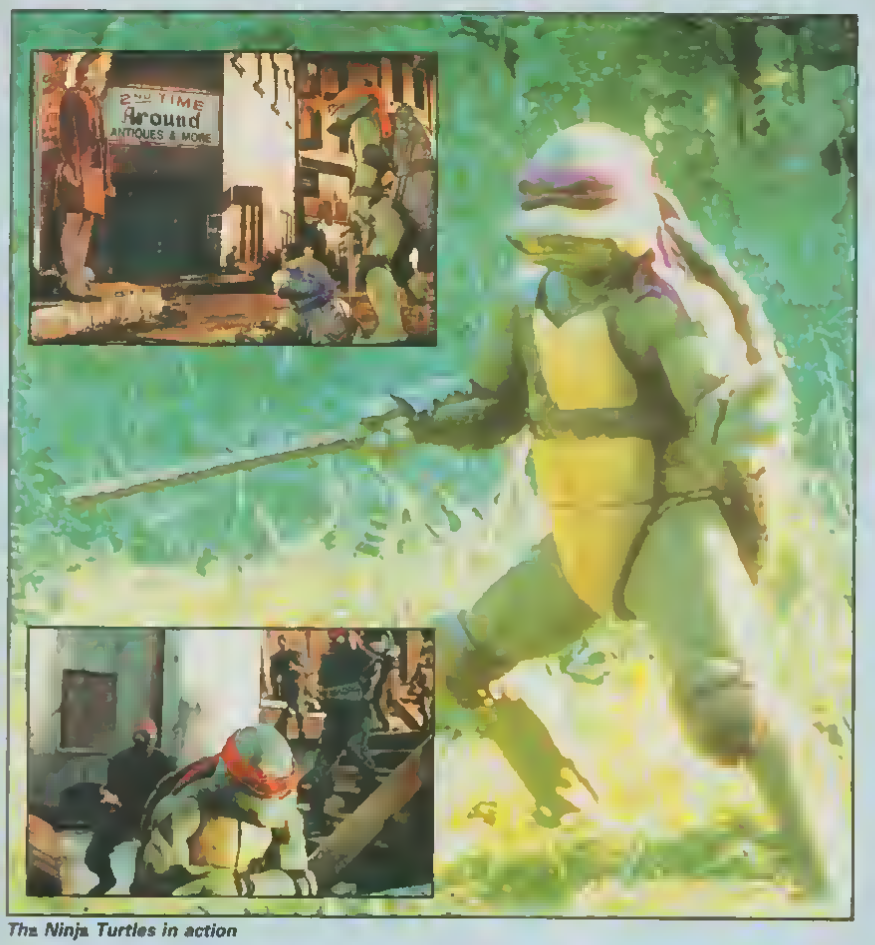
The plot finds the high-kicking quartet deftly decimating the rotten Foot Clan who are cheerfully terrorizing New York but, like director Steve Barron, you need not really bother with the storyline. He and writers Todd W Langen and Bobby Herbeck simply use its familiar collection of cliches as a convenient vehicle for a lively saga of suspense, derring-do and thrilling Martial Arts action, smartly staged by Pat Johnson.

As a newcomer to the weird world of the Turtles I found it difficult to differentiate between the four reliable reptiles and also at times to hear what they were saying. But judging from the riotous reaction of the youngsters at the screening I attended, most of the dialogue is superfluous. Never mind the words, savour the plentiful action.

Critical comment is really redundant here. The fact that the film is directed with minimal style, the human actors are no more than adequate, the cinematography (at least, in the print I saw) is dark and muddy and the plot wouldn't tax the intelligence of even a devoted Jeremy Beadle fan is



'Who's pinched my free Turtle stickers?'



The Ninja Turtles in action

irralevant. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* is more than a mere movie. It's a surefire critic-proof hit and a memorable addition to one of the most efficient merketing cempaigns end media hypes in yeare.

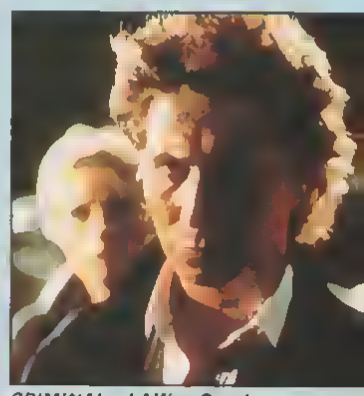
Early on in *Criminal Law* (18) we know the identity of the psychopath who is raping and killing women in Boston, but that doesn't detract too much from this taut reworking of tbe traditional "maniac-on-the-loose" shocker. It's not a wbodunit but rather a "will-he-stop-it?" with Gary Oldmen as e lawyer who comes to realize that the client he has successfully defended nn a rape-and-murder charge is, in fact, as guilty es heil. So be sets out to do sometbing about it.

Merk Kasdao's well-crafted screenplay creates strong suspense and his two protagoolsts, Oldman and serial killer Kevin Bacon, are sharply characterised within the defined parameters of the genre.

'Which way to tha sewers?'

CRIMINAL LAW Bad guy Bacon

Oldman carried the burden of the drama end carries it well. His American accent is pretty good most of the time and he creates a convincing end reasonebly complex character. His decision to turo detective-avenger and bring home the Bacon to justice arises logically from the action and is oot merely a grafted-on plot contrivance. Becon, in a pivotal (but not that large) role, is genuinely chilling and Joe Don Baker contributes e



CRIMINAL LAW Good guy Oldman

telling portrait of a bull-necked policeman.

While *Criminal Law* doesn't offer any amazing new revelations in story and cheracter, it does emerge as a slick, suspenseful thriller whose old-story-in-newish-clothes piotline la tautly end stylishly directed by Britain's Martio Campbell, making an intelligent end above-everage feeture film debut. Soma of his too-tight set-ups betray his previous experience in television, notably the overrated *Edge uf Darkness*, but he's done a more than competent job here and It will be interesting in the future tn see how he handles a more innovative subject.

CREEPY COLLECTABLES

The following titles have just been released – or escaped!

HALLOWEEN II (18)
**

The grisly sequel to John Carpenter's 1978 horror hit continues on the same night on which the original ended and finds Jamie Lee Curtis being pursued round the corridors of a strangely deserted hospital by the knife-wielding Michael Myers. Scripted by Carpenter and Debra Hill this is a fairly slick catalogue of stalk and slash butchery which shows little regard for plot logic or characterisation.

Castle Vision, £9.99

ABSOLUTION (18)
***

Anthony (SLEUTH) Shaffer wrote this convoluted 1978 chiller set in a Roman Catholic boys school where humourless by-the-book priest Richard Burton falls victim to a very nasty practical joke played by an evil student. Powerful brooding material that remains horrifyingly credible to the end. Burton gives one of his strongest performances.

Castle Vision, £9.99

AMITYVILLE II (18)
**

Before the Lutz family moved into the most haunted property on Long Island it was apparently the scene of much EXORCIST-style mayhem as detailed in this dopey prequel to the unaccountably popular AMITYVILLE HORROR. Here lourish Burt Young plays the price for not noticing that his son Jack Magner has an India rubber complexion and speaks in more voices than Rory Bremner. At least it's eventful.

Castle Vision, £9.99

DAWN OF THE DEAD (18)
****

George Romero's gut-wrenching 1979 zombie movie classic (a spirited sequel to his 1968 hit NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD) arrives on sell through at last minus roughly two minutes of Tom Savini's more excessive makeup effects. Less scary than the first the accent here is on cartoony ultra-violence as four ill-assorted protagonists hole up in a Pittsburgh shopping mall and take on flesh-eating ghouls and a horde of rampaging Hell's Angels. Surprisingly well acted and written though a little overlong at two hours. The Goblin music score is as memorable as their work on SUSPIRIA.

Entertainment In Video, £9.99

DAWN OF THE DEAD – That morning after feelin'

No kidding!

FRIDAY THE 13TH PART V: A NEW BEGINNING (18)
**

Danny (SAVAGE STREETS) Steinmann directed this fifth instalment in the popular slice 'n' dice series based around Mrs Voorhees' little lad Jason. This time out Tommy Jarvis, the youngster who offed Jason with a machete at the end of the last instalment has been sent to a halfway house for dangerous mental cases. Before long there's a hockey-masked horror on the loose shaving flares in people's mouths, sticking shears in their eyes etc. Has Jason returned or is it Tommy keeping the spirit of the show alive? Less gory than some the film does contain more gratuitous nudity to make up for it. Par for the course.

CIC Video, £9.99

FRIDAY THE 13TH PART VI: JASON LIVES (18)
**½

Just before being dismembered in this sixth entry in the long-running shock series an alcoholic grave-digger quips: 'Some folks have a strange idea of entertainment.' This one's a little better than average because writer/director Tom McLoughlin has injected some welcome touches of humour into the movie including an opening credits crawl straight out of a Bond movie. Brought back to life Frankenstein Monster style, by a bolt of lightning Jason (C.J. Graham) is now a menaceless parody of his old self as he stalks his youthful victims in a rural setting. No topless nudity at all in this one and it's the best-photographed in the whole series. The body count is as follows: machete for two, impaling on a spear, broken bottle in throat, 360 degree head twist, bare fist through stomach and assorted stabbings and decapitations. Alice Cooper did the soundtrack.

CIC Video, £9.99

THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN (PG)
●●●½

The tense exciting (and maybe a teensy overlong) 1971 screen version of the Michael Crichton bestseller about a group of scientists struggling to identify a space virus that has wiped out almost all the inhabitants of a New Mexico village James Olson and David Wayne lead the modest cast of character players but the star of the show is the five-storey underground laboratory where the action is mainly set Robert Wise directs with clinical brilliance often using split-screen techniques and Gil Melle provides a weirdly compelling music score apparently performed by a computer Prepare to be perched on the edge of your seat for the nailbiting last ten minutes

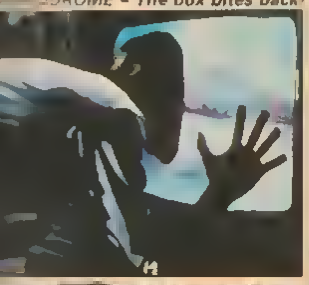
CIC Video, £9.99

DEAD RINGERS (18)
●●●½

Jeremy Irons takes a double role playing twin gynaecologists who share each other's lives – and lovers – in one of David Cronenberg s weirdest and most memorable screen outings The film is actually based on the true story of NYC gynaecologists Steven and Cyril Marcus who were found dead in their garbage strewn Upper East Side apartment in 1975 – a double-suicide brought on by a drug-addiction Using the story as a starting point to explore his own fascination with the subject of bodily corruption Cronenberg gives us yet another vividly realised film that is rife in odd ideas and deeply unsettling throughout It s also ultimately very depressing which is the main reason that it enjoyed little commercial success DEAD RINGERS is a must see nevertheless It slowly creeps over the viewer revealing its horrors at a deliberate pace rather than shocking outright with special effects gore

CBS Fox Video, £9.99

ODROME – The box bites back!



A Misfit of Science

TRANCERS (15)
●●●

Jack Deth is back – and he s never even been here before Those who didn t think Charles Band had it in him to make a good movie should take a look at this neat little low-budget hybrid of BLADE RUNNER and THE TERMINATOR which casts reliable character actor Tim Thomerson as future cop Jack sent back 300 years to modern day L A to track down the leader of a deadly race of telepaths It s short sweet lightweight stuff but visually arresting and full of amusing satirical observations on the fads of 1985 TRANCERS 2 is due any minute

Entertainment In Video, £9.99

MISFITS OF SCIENCE (PG)
●●

Dean Paul Martin (crooner Dino s son) stars in this forgettable 1985 comic book fable – the pilot for a short-lived TV show that never made it to these shores – about four teenagers given super powers to help mankind In their first assignment the misfits call on these powers to stop some one-dimensional baddies from developing a neutron cannon Ho hum!

CIC Video, £9.99

REPO MAN (18)
●●½

Alex Cox s bizarre 1984 blending of punk rock imagery and surrealistic science fiction is not for all tastes but it s certainly original Emilio Estevez is a punker wandering through the blighted streets of L A who becomes the protege of Bud (Harry Dean Stanton) a crusty car repossessor The two head off in pursuit of a 1964 Chevy Malibu that has been stolen by a lobotomised nuclear scientist But also on its trail are a gaggle of ruthless government agents some UFO cultists and the infamous Rodriguez Brothers who want the deadly power that s hidden in the boot Engaging stuff to be sure but it goes on way too long Produced by ex-Monkee Mike Nesmith

CIC Video, £9.99

Cronenberg's telly addicts

VAMP(18)
●●½

A reasonable blending of teen comedy and out-and-out horror movie this 1988 production tells of how the planners of a fraternity party go out to hire a stripper and stumble into the After Dark Club a sinister establishment run by Grace Jones (who is actually Katrina an Egyptian mummy goddess) The lads quickly realise that Grace and her strippers are femme fatales just waiting to put the

bite on unsuspecting visitors But by that time their number has been decimated – and they are trapped in the neighbourhood Greg Cannom s makeup effects are extremely grue some but the highlight of the show is probably Grace Jones s erotic dance routine (in a body painting by New York graffiti artist Keith Haring) Quite stylishly done and very similar in tone to John Landis s AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON

New World Video, £9.99

VIDEODROME(18)
●●•

David Cronenberg s powerful 1983 science fiction nightmare stars the great James Woods as a sleazy cable TV programmer whose consciousness is invaded by a mind-controlling torture show called Videodrome As usual Cronenberg indulges his taste for bizarre body-warping images videocassettes are thrust inside gaping stomachs a hand turns into a fleshy gun etc Great Rick Baker effects but you ll need to be a fan of the director to make sense of (or allowances for!) the confusing second half of the picture Some footage of Debbie Harry burning herself with a lit cigarette was removed from the original rental release but S&M fans will be glad to hear it has been fully restored for sell through!

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SCANNERS II

Richard Marshall previews some movie mayhem that will blow your mind!

They are a telepathic nightmare that can bore deep into your mind. If you're lucky, they will only control you. If you cross them, they will erupt like a psychic volcano and tear you apart, brain cell by screaming brain cell...

They are the SCANNERS, an underground race of mutants created when their pregnant mothers were given a brain-expanding drug by misguided medico Patrick McGoohan. In David Cronenberg's explosive 1982 horror hit of the same name, they attempted to use their awesome powers to take over the world, but were thwarted by good Scanner Cameron Vale (Stephen Lack), who triumphed over his evil telepathic brother (Michael Ironside) in a grisly, eyeball-popping battle of the minds.

SCANNERS 2 – THE NEW ORDER (coming soon from MGM/UA Video) is a $5 million sequel to Cronenberg's movie that stars David Ketchum as a young country doctor who is the son of the first film's hero.

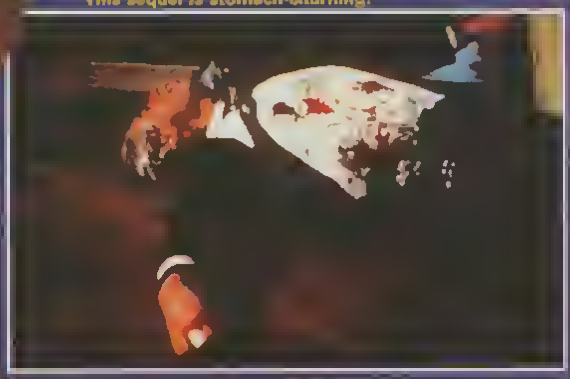
The eyes have it

Cameron Vale (and thus possesses the same head-shattering powers). A trip to the city brings Ketchum's awesome abilities to the surface, and to the attention of police commander Wayne Forrester (Yvan Ponton) and Dr Morse (Tom Butler). This evil duo has established a police order made up of highly trained Scanners. They keep their recruits in line by getting them hooked on P-2, a highly-addictive drug that brings mental peace but also has the unfortunate side effect of turning them into murderous zombies...

David Cronenberg was too busy preparing his long-awaited screen version of William Burrough's THE NAKED LUNCH to become involved with this one. Instead he left the directing chores to newcomer Christian Duguay, an accomplished commercials director who is particularly proficient in the use of the Steadicam – so look for some fluid camerawork here.

Duguay says that this will be a very different film, visually, from the first: 'I am going for the "look" of BLADE RUNNER and BLACK RAIN,' he explains. 'It will be my vision, my madness.' Helping bring that vision to the screen will be the up and coming effects group Shadoworks, who will have to go some to beat what Chris Walas and Stephen Dupois came up with in the original film. However, advance reports suggest that they have done a sterling job, particularly in a climatic sequence where one unlucky character implodes under the force of a multiple Scanner attack. Gore blimey, whatever next?

A victim of telekinetic terror



This sequel is stomach-churning!

LAND OF THE GIANTS

As with last month's *Outer Limits* guide, episodes are listed a) in their original order of production, rather than the sequence the U.S. network eventually chose to run them, and b) with the emphasis on relevant information and interesting trivia rather than simply listing endless actors' credits printed many times before.

Episode Guide by Jon Abbott

The Crash

wr Anthony Wilson, dir Irwin Allen

As the pilot this episode not only sets the scene for the series but has to sell the show to both network and audience. Consequently Allen pulls out all the stops with endless effects scenes and exciting confrontations with perils of all description. The whole episode has an almost dreamlike quality, particularly in the lab sequence.

The Weird World

wr Anthony Wilson, Ellis St Joseph, dir Harry Harris

Glenn Corbett who also played a marooned castaway in *Metamorphosis*" for *Star Trek*, plays long-lost astronaut Major Kagan, sole survivor of a previous space-flight that went missing. Like Dr Smith in Allen's *Lost In Space*. Fitzhugh began the series as a wicked arch-villain before becoming a lovable rogue, a gradual change somewhat obscured by ABC's episode-juggling. Here he's still clutching his suitcase full of stolen cash and doing dastardly deeds to betray the others. Ellis St Joseph like Wilson is another unsung hero of 60's TV SF having scripted 'The Sixth Finger' for *The Outer Limits* and the Pearl Harbour episode of *The Time Tunnel*.

The Trap

wr Anthony Wilson, Jack Turley, dir Sobey Martin

While trying to salvage materials for the ship from a giant alarm clock, two of their number are captured by giant scientists with sound-sensitive devices. This is the episode in which Fitzhugh finally relents, and pitches in to become one of the gang. Jack Turley wrote "Hunter's Moon" for *Lost In Space*.

The Bounty Hunter

wr Anthony Wilson, Don Ullman, dir Harry Harris

This is the episode which establishes that the giants are aware of the 'little people' and want to hunt them down and capture them. Also established is that like Robinson and Major West in the earliest episodes of *Lost In Space*, Steve and Mark are frequently in disagreement as to the correct course of action (Steve always turns out to be right of course because Gary Conway is the star of the show! This tends to make him just a little insufferable at times.)

The Golden Cage

wr Anthony Wilson, Jack Turley, dir Sobey Martin

Steve and Mark fall out when the giants place a beautiful girl in a glass bottle to trap and study her rescuers.

The Lost Ones

wr Bob and Esther Mitchell, dir Harry Harris

More castaways from an earlier flight this time a party of juvenile delinquents. The story goes that Zalman King as the leader of the kids was a New York Method actor who inadvertently punched Conway's lights out twice during fight scenes. Today Conway produces action pictures and King directs sleazy art films. Funny old world.

Manhunt

wr J E Selby, Stanley Silverman, dir Sobey Martin

An escaped convict picks up the Spindrift (the Earth travellers' ship) and stumbles into quicksand with it. Suspenseful and those with a passion for the paraphernalia of TV SF get a good look at the design of the ship.

Framed

wr Mann Rubin, dir Harry Harris

The Earth people witness a murder and set out to prove the innocence of a hobo who has been set up by the real killer, a photographer (SF TV regular Paul Carr) whose camera lens they want to swipe for the ship.

The Creed

wr Bob and Esther Mitchell, dir Sobey Martin

A giant doctor (Paul Fix) sympathetic to the plight of the "little people" sacrifices his freedom in order to help Steve operate on the seriously ill. Barry Fix was also the doctor in the second *Star Trek* pilot.

The Flight Plan

wr Peter Packer, dir Harry Harris

Packer wrote many 'hostile visitor' yarns for *Lost In Space* and his only contribution to *Land Of The Giants* was – you guessed it – a 'hostile visitor' story. A giant scientist (Linden Chiles) uses 'miniaturisation pills' to shrink down and gain the trust of the Earth people in order to steal their superior scientific secrets. Linden Chiles, a TV SF regular played Tony's dad in *The Time Tunnel* and David Vincent's brother in *The Invaders*.

Underground

wr Anthony Wilson, Ellis St Joseph, dir Sobey Martin

Fitzhugh's criminal past comes in useful when the little people aid a giant scientist who works for an underground group opposing the despotic Supreme Council that runs the land of the giants.

One giant step for television SF.

The regulars gather outside 'The Spindrift'

Double Cross

wr Bob and Esther Mitchell dir Harry Harris

Fitzhugh gets a bump on the head and reverts to his old ways helping two unsavoury characters steal a ruby from a local museum

On A Clear Night You Can See The Earth

wr Anthony Wilson Sheldon Stark dir Sobey Martin

sode who Mourns Fat Adonais?" and the ratty horror films *Ben* and *Willard*

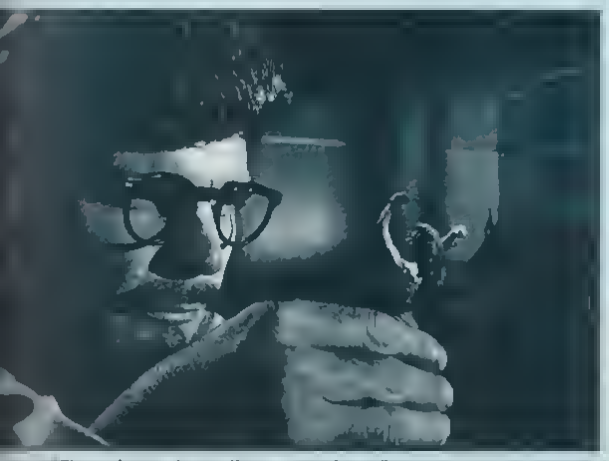
Brainwash

wr William Welch dir Harry Harris

One of William Welch's once-through-the-typewriter runarounds with giants (Warren Stevens and Leonard Stone) using abandoned equipment belonging to previous Earth visitors to lure the latest arrivals into a trap

Terror-go-Round

wr Charles Bennett dir Sobey Martin



"This relationship will never work out"

This is essentially a re-make of *Doctor Cyclops*, the old 1940 B-movie that provided more than a little inspiration for the visual look of the show. Michael Ansara, who has appeared in *Star Trek*, *The Outer Limits* and every Irwin Allen SF show sometimes more than once, plays the evil Murrah who has invented goggles that let him see in the dark

Ghost Town

wr Anthony Wilson Gilbert Ralston William Welch dir Nathan Juran

A spiteful little girl menaces the space travellers in a model town built by her eccentric grand-father. Gilbert Ralston also wrote the *Star Trek* epi-

This rather slow episode concerns the efforts of the group to free Barry and Fitzhugh from the clutches of circus gypsies. Charles Bennett wrote the scripts for most of Irwin Allen's pre-TV feature films including *The Lost World* and *Voyage/Sea* also contributing extensively to the *Voyage* TV series

Sabotage

wr Bob and Esther Mitchell dir Harry Harris

Steve, Mark, and Dan dominate this episode in which an unscrupulous public official tries to discredit a politician with benevolent intentions toward the little people by blaming an act of sabotage on them. Robert

Gary Conway

Colbert the noble scientist of *The Time Tunnel* makes a splendid villain here

Genius At Work

wr Bob and Esther Mitchell dir Sobey Martin

Little 'Ronny' Howard of schmaltzy *Happy Days* fame was barely out of the crib when he was on TV in Walking Distance one of the most famous and memorable episodes of *The Twilight Zone*. As a teenager he was starring in George Lucas nostalgia classic *American Graffiti*. Today, he's a director himself making schmaltzy fantasy films like *Splash* and *Cocoon*. Here he guests as a boy genius who has formulated a food substance that can grow the little people to the same size as the giants. Naturally Fitzhugh can't wait to try it out and manages to get himself arrested after stealing a criminal's clothes

Deadly Lodestone

wr William Stuart dir Harry Harris

Dan is dismayed to discover that a new detection device of the giants is by a strange twist of fate, tuned to a type of metal used for a pin in his leg. This episode introduces exemplary character actor Kevin Hagen as recurring adversary Inspector Kobick

The Night Of Thrombeldinbar

wr Bob and Esther Mitchell dir Sobey Martin

Fitzhugh is mistaken as a gift-giving elf of giant mythology by two unhappy little orphan boys and gleefully goes along with the gag to light up their lives. Villain of the piece is TV regular Alfred Ryder who made many appearances in *Voyage* but is best known as Dr Crater in *Star Trek*'s "The Man Trap" and Mr Nexus in the superior *Invaders* episode "Vikar". There's a great horrific twist to this magical fantasy yarn

Seven Little Indians

wr Bob and Wanda Duncan dir Harry Harris

If you think the new *Star Trek*'s Wesley is irritating stay well clear of Stefan Arngrim's dumbbell Barry Lockridge who thankfully spends most of his

'The Weird World'

time in the background In this story the first of two involving Barry and his dog Chipper the dog is captured and put on display at a zoo, and Barry sets off to rescue his pet

Target: Earth

wr Arthur Weiss dir Sobey Martin
In another dispute between Steve and Mark the passengers split from the crew to do a deal with giant scientists and offer their knowledge for a flight back to Earth Guest starring is Arthur Franz pipe-sucking scientist of the legendary *Invaders From Mars*, and Dee Hartford who appeared in three episodes of *Lost In Space* twice as android Verda

Rescue

wr Bob and Esther Mitchell dir Harry Harris
Straightforward rescue drama as the little people help anxious parents rescue their kids from a disused well while Kobick s S I D men lurk nearby Lee Meriwether of *Time Tunnel* and 60 s *Batman* movie fame is the worried mum

Shell Game

wr Bob and Esther Mitchell William Welch dir Harry Harris
Captured by a fisherman s family, the little people barter for their freedom by offering to make a hearing aid for the couple s young son who has found their spaceship

Return Of Inida

wr Bob and Esther Mitchell dir Sobey Martin
The little people stumble into a haunted house while sheltering from a storm and encounter an elderly illusionist able to perform improbable tricks

The Chase

wr William Welch, Arthur Weiss, dir Sobey Martin
Adequate but close-to-dull episode with the little people forced to assist Kobick in tracking down elusive counterfeiters threatening the giants world s economy Kobick takes three of the Earth party hostage but naturally he has no intention of turning them loose whatever the outcome

Don Matheson

Second Season

The Inside Rail

wr Richard Shapiro dir Harry Harris
Fitzhugh befriends a hobo in order to play the horses at a local horsetrack, and causes the capture of a number of the group There s a nice scene where the little people clobber one of their guards with a horseshoe !

Chamber Of Fear

wr Arthur Weiss dir Sobey Martin
Steve and Dan are menaced by a giant dog while trying to rescue Fitzhugh and Valerie and Mark get spooked in a wax museum when the little people become involved with two jewel thieves

The Mechanical Man

wr William Stuart, dir Harry Harris
Misfired attempt to do a *Frankenstein* fable with mad scientist Bradenck Crawford and stooge Stuart Margolin (Angel' in *The Rockford Files*) using the little people to assist him in correcting faults in his super-strong robot

Collector's Item

wr Bob and Wanda Duncan Sidney Marshall dir Sobey Martin
Valerie becomes a pawn in a murder plot when she is forced to pose as a ballerina in a musical box fat on eccentric wealthy collector of oddities

Don Marshall

Giants And All That Jazz

wr Richard Shapiro, dir Harry Harris
Former boxer Sugar Ray Robinson guest stars as an amateur trumpeter down on his luck until Dan, also a player introduces the giant world to the mute and opens up the wonderful world of jazz to Robinson and his unscrupulous promoters

Six Hours To Live

wr Dan Ullman, dir Sobey Martin

The Unsuspected

wr Bob and Esther Mitchell dir Harry Harris
An episode similar to "The Space Creature for *Lost In Space* (and it was an old chestnut then) The little people are terrorised by a string of mysterious disappearances among their number as they vanish one by one

A Place Called Earth

wr William Welch dir Herman Jones
Time-travelling criminals from Earth s future arrive on the giants world to use it as a beach head for their plans to conquer the Earth during its past (by re-populating it with subservient dullards) Wiping out everybody else the time travellers hope to return to their present to find that the 100 hand-picked dumbbells who have survived will have bred into an easily manipulated society of dupes (there are rumours they check out England first!) It s a great idea but ultimately just one of Welch s typical and enjoyable B-film style juvey fantasies

The Deadly Pawn

wr Arthur Weiss dir Nathan Juran
Rather silly and desperate episode with the little people being used as live chess pieces on a lethal chess board Just about holds the interest but there doesn't seem to be any particularly good reason for what s happening Irwin Allen veteran John Zaremba a pulp SF stalwart looks as mystified as the audience, Nathan Juran does what he can

Land Of The Lost

wr William Welch dir Sobey Martin
Rather banal tale with the Earth travellers journeying by balloon to a despotic isolated society run by a brutal tyrant (familiar TV face Hehemiah Persoff from *Time Tunnel*s

'The Crash'

Richard Anderson, best known to genre buffs as one of the crew in *Forbidden Planet* and boss of the bionic super-heroes of the 70 s, plays a reporter covering the gruesome execution of a young man who the little people know is innocent of murder while raiding a farm for grain they've overheard the nervous conversation between the two hicks who *did* do it

'Secret Weapon etc) Uninspired time-killer with a couple of nice ideas

Every Dog Needs A Bay

wr Jerry Thomas dir Harry Harris
This is the second of the Barry and Chipper yarns this time the dog

ather foolishly gets into a fight with on oversized counterpart and Barry sks all to get the little ryke to a vet s rgery Bob Shayne

The Clones

Oliver Crawford Bob and Esther Mitchell dir Nathan Juran
Superior episode with mad scientist Dr Arna (William Schallert) creating clones of the little people which due to a flaw in the process are aggressive and totally convinced that they are the originals The special effects are consequently even more complicated than usual with two sets of everybody running about and the actors doubles are used imaginatively

Comeback

wr Richard Shapiro dir Harry Harris
Veteran B movie horror star John Carradine sends up his genie as fading has-been Egor Crull who offers the little people he has captured to a Schlock movie outfit as "special effects" in exchange for a starring role

Nightmare (aka The Delta Effect)

wr William Welch dir Nathan Juran
A device built by a friendly giant scientist to take the Earth people home inadvertently turns them invisible instead and throws in hallucinations for good measure Juran exploits the nightmarish dream sequences to the hilt particularly in the scenes in which the little people are in the city all floating shadows and neon lights

Home Sweet Home (aka Return)

wr William Welch dir Harry Harris
Another Welch filler which spends on extras what it saves on apticals and props (there are hardly any scenes with the giants in this episode) Fitzhugh stumbles onto the spaceship of the two treacherous time-travellers from A Place Called Earth and he and Steve inadvertently take off in it returning to the Earth nearly a hundred years into the past

Our Man O'Reilly

wr Jackson Gillis dir Sobey Martin
Jackson Gillis is best known in TV circles for writing *Perry Mason* and *Columbo* mysteries but when he wrote for the fantasy genre (he tended to write from a fairytale perspective rather than sci fi Here Alan Hale of *Gilligan s Island* notoriety) is a giant Irishman (so they have Ireland on the giant s world too?) mistaking the Earth people for leprechauns

Ponic (aka No Escape)

wr Bob and Wanda Duncc dir Sobey Martin
A ruthless SID man sets his sights on a genial old inventor who has invented a teleporter machine that may be able to take the party back to Earth

Pay The Piper

wr Richard Shapiro dir Harry Harris
genious idea has the Pied Piper of legend revealed to be an intergalactic traveller who stopped off on Earth to rid Hamelin of rats (and kids) and has now arrived to clean up the giants world of verminous little people Jonathan Harris Doctor Smith of *Lost In Space* is well cast as the Piper

Don Matheson and Don Marshall

The Secret City Of Limbo

wr Bob and Esther Mitchell dir Sobey Martin
Mark Fitzhugh and Valerie stumble onto an advanced secret civilisation hidden underground on the giants world threatened with discovery by an archaeological dig A talky episode with some careless writing but graced with a splendid set for the underground city

Doomsday

wr Don Ullman dir Harry Harris
The Earth people stumble onto a murderous terrorist plot to set off bombs in the giant city Francine York playing the female terrorist was the amazon queen in "The Colonists" for *Lost In Space* Another Charles Dierkop was the villain s stooge in Allen s unsold pilot film *City Beneath The Sea* Silly "epilogue" has the crew chuckling over the presence of a cute giant monkey which had it decided to be playful could have destroyed or exposed their campsite!

Wild Journey

wr William Welch dir Harry Harris
I was running around with a ray-gun on the Fox lot Bruce Dern told a journalist in the 70 s when I got a call from Jack Nicholson The call was for him to co-star in Nicholson s movie *Drive He Said*. A film that made Dern a major star of the 1970 s In fact he was running around with a Space-Time Manipulator , and Dern s indifference and disdain toward this particular acting assignment (he was also in the legendary *Outer Limits* episode The Zanti Misfits) is entirely justified

The Deadly Dark (aka The Retaliator)

wr William Stuart dir Harry Harris
Mark is framed for the murder of an SID inspector

Graveyard Of Fools

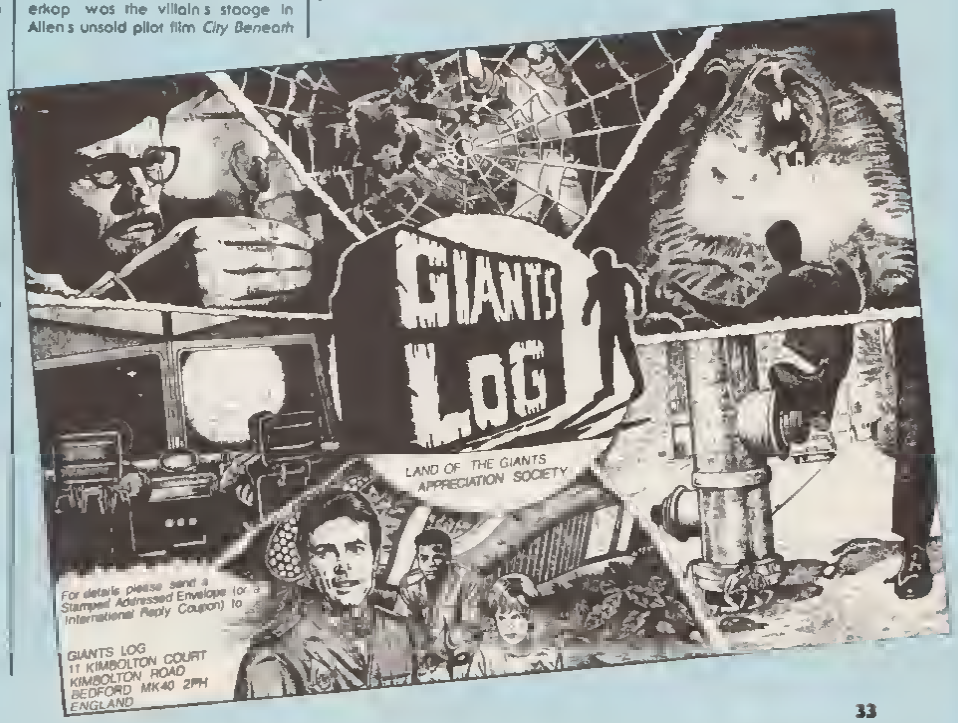
wr Sidney Marshall dir Sobey Martin
Giant scientists send the little people as guinea pigs to report on an uncharted area of the giants world from which no explorers have returned
An okay time-killer but it s not difficult to see why the network originally decided to air this one last It has precious little to do with giants, and ambles along with very little purpose and making very little sense

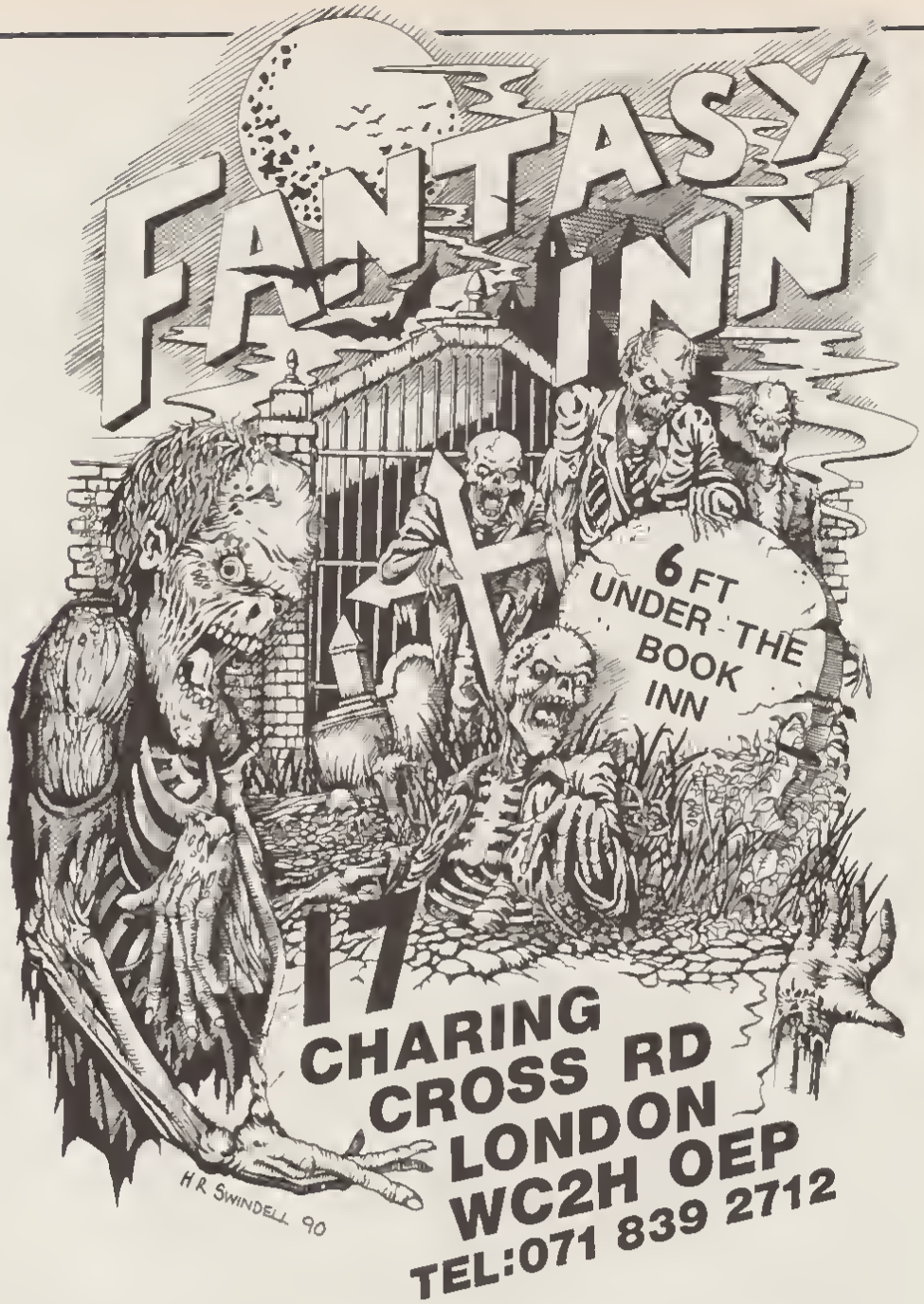
A Small War

wr Anthony Wilson Shirl Hendryx dir Harry Harris
The Earth people come under siege from a young boy's mechanical toy army when he mistakes them for a rival playmate s attack force (ah yeah right !) The little boy is far too old to not be able to tell the difference between toy soldiers and tiny humans and at this late date in the series should surely be aware of the existence of the little people The constant attacks by planes tanks and toy soldiers get quite tedious after a while In no way helped by Harry Harris boring repetitive direction

The Marionettes

wr William Welch dir Sobey Martin
When an elderly puppeteer injures himself saving Valerie from the clutches of a giant gorilla (yes Janos Prohaska again) in his travelling carnival the little people repay his kindness by posing as his puppets until he recovers Music costumes and make-up appear out of nowhere and no-one thinks to ask how this truly amazing ventriloquist can make two puppets sing at once!





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COMIC Crypt

From CAPTAIN BRITAIN to those inescapable NINJA TURTLES, Alan McKenzie looks at the latest from the wonderful world of comics.

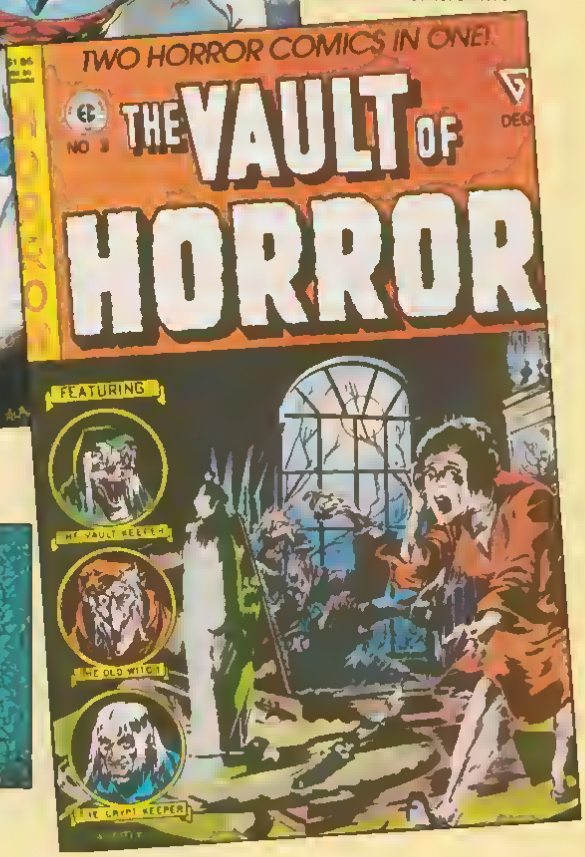
Unlike any of its other american counter parts, Marvel Comics has its own, reasonably autonomous UK operation. I say reasonably autonomous because the parent company jealously guards its characters from all use and misuse, and only occasionally grudgingly allows us country cousins to see how the British arm handles the creative side.

Even Captain Britain, a character created, it is alleged, by Stan Lee solely for the British market seems out of bounds since his forcible induction into the American team *Excalibur* by X-honcho Chris Claremont. It came as some surprise when Marvel UK announced a new series featuring Captain Britain. *Knights of Pendragon* was the result and it's Marvel's fourth stab at selling the Captain to an uncaring British reader. It is perhaps for all those reasons that Captain Britain himself appears to take a back seat to Welsh copper Dai Thomas and the strangely U.N.I.T. – like organisation W.H.O. as they all weave their way through an ambitious ecology-meets-Camelot fantasy adventure.

After five issues, the comic has presented a consistently slick package around a solid, somehow *English*-style story written by John Tomlinson and Dan Abnett, illustrated with American-Marvel approved artwork. The result reads less flamboyantly than its average American sibling. The covers, by foremost Captain Britain artist Alan Davis are stunning. The interior artwork, by Gary Erskine and Andy Lanning, lacks a little character, surprising considering how distinctive each is on his own. A worthy effort and deserving of support.

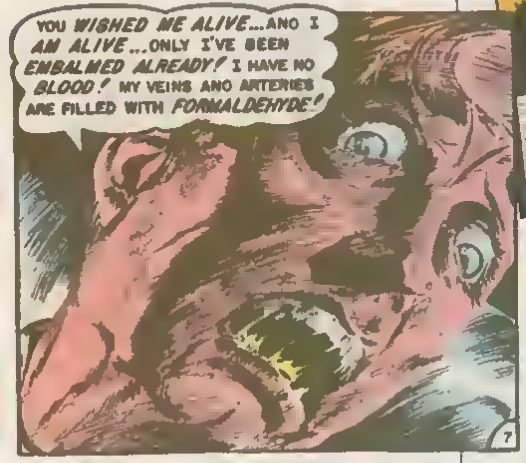
WEIRD TALES

Another worthy and noble effort is the Gladstone series of reprints of the legendary E.C. Comics, the horror range that was all the rage in the Fifties. Each $2.00 comic contains sixty-four pages of superlative fantasy comic material packaging two of the original E.C Comics into one book. There are currently three reprint titles which Gladstone promise will showcase the entire E.C

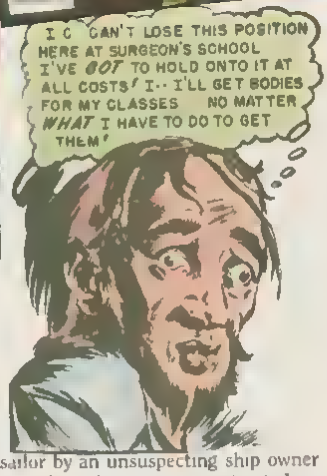


range *Weird Science* is reprinting the two E.C science fiction comics, Weird Science and Weird Fantasy. *Tales from the Crypt* covers the original Tales from the Crypt and Crimesuspense Stories. *Vault of Horror* will give us the entire run of the original Vault of Horror and Haunt of Fear For a good sampling of what all the fuss was about back in those Rock 'n' Roll years, these series are your best bet

Also highly recommended is DC Comics' occasional *Sgt Rock* series, chiefly written by veteran DC editor Bob Kanigher during the Sixties and illustrated with panache by Joe Kubert or Russ Heath. These excellent battle tales stand the test of time, despite their slightly gung-ho heroics. Especially worth seeking out are the Kanigher/Kubert *Enemy Ace* reprints which tell bleak stories of misplaced chivalry in the skies of WWI.



I must also give mention to Sergio Aragones' superb barbarian spoof, *Groc the Wanderer*. The last issue I read (69, September) had the inordinately stupid Groo engaged as a sailor by an unsuspecting ship owner in a race for a large cargo contract. In a rare flash of insight Groo conceives a stupendous, *Fitzcarraldo*-style manoeuvre in which he points out that it would be quicker for the ship to go *over* a peninsula instead of around it, with predictably catastrophic results

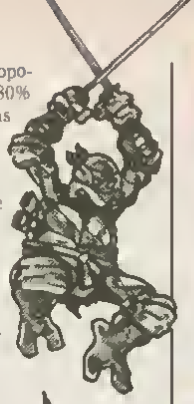


HORROR SPECIAL

Still on sale as you read this, the *Revolver Horror Special* brought to you by the same folks that gave you *2000 AD*, the *RHS* showcases some of the best new talent (and a couple of old-timers) on offer in the British comicbook marketplace. With a dozen stories there are just too many personnel involved to list, but the following need to be namechecked- Garth Ennis, the Pleece Bros, Neil Gaiman, John Bolton, Mark Millar, Igor Goldkind, Si Spencer (twice) and Will Simpson

On the subject of nepotism, I feel duty-bound to mention how good *2000 AD Weekly* has been looking since the facelift of Prog 700. Judge Dredd is still busy clean-

ing up after the "Necropolis" storyline in which 80% of Mega-City One was devastated. Judge Anderson is busy on the far side of the Iron Curtain furthering the cause of Glasnost in a Mega-City One/Soviet mission to uncover an age-old psychic menace. Fabulous artwork by the ever-reliable Arthur Renson. The laffs are supplied in abundance by two new stories, "Time Flies" by Garth Ennis and Philip Bond and Hewligan's Haircut" by Pete Milligan and Jamie Hewlett.



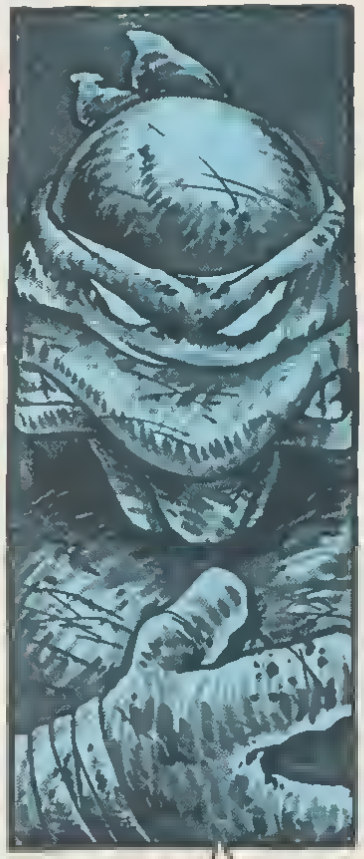
...BETTER!

TURTLE RECALL

Finally, it seems an opportune time to look at *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, with the blockbuster movie lumbering into view on the cinematic horizon. Created amid the comic shop boom of the mid-Eighties, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* was originally conceived as a parody of Marvel's *X-Men* and *Daredevil* series of the same period. Launched at 3000 copies and quickly reprinted several times as demand mounted, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* made publishing look easy and suddenly everyone was reprinting low-distribution, black-and-white comics in pursuit of the fast-buck. The titles grew sillier as fledgling publishers tried to capture Eastman and Laird's secret formula, the most obvious of which was Adolescent Radioactive Black-Belt Hamsters. All pretty ghastly, really.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles wasn't an especially good comic but it did have the good fortune to be turned into a cartoon for the large Saturday Morning slot on American TV. In the translation to the small screen, the title was changed to *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles*. This presumably to prevent the characters exerting some kind of hiedous mind control on the nation's youth and turning them all into the kind of rampaging "kung-fu expert" of which our tabloid newspapers are so fond.

From here it was spotted by the sharp marketing man whose name escapes me and parlayed into a multi-million dollar licensing and movie property. And Eastman and Laird were able to take an early retirement. While the original comics, all of which are pretty valuable now, had a certain charm, the current run of *Turtle* comics have the look of homogenised, tv-tie-in comics more normally associated with British Marvel. That the comic is published by owners of *2000 AD* might come therefore as something of a surprise. However, *Turtles* was last reported as selling a massive 700,000 per fortnight and rising! And with the hugely successful movie still to sweep across the country, you can be sure we haven't seen the last of Turtle-mania. Will it last as long as last year's Bat-mania? I think it will ●



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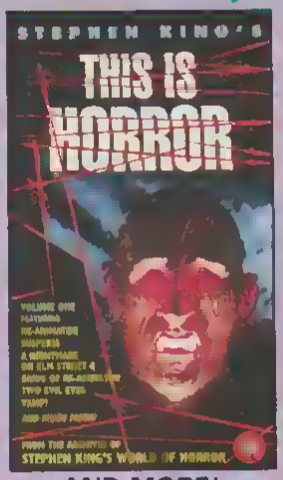

Exclusiva interview with Derio Argento (Tenebrae, Susparia, Creepers & Two Evil Eyes) and Steve Johnson – speciel affects wizerd from XFX (Nightmere on Elm Street 4 and Night of the Demon.)

Behind the scenes with Brien Yuzne (Re-Animetor and preview of Brida of Re-Animetor) plus showcase of femele vampires with Ingrid Pitt (House That Dripped Blood) Anulka (Vempyres, Deughters of Dracule) end Grace Jones in Vemp.

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THE GIRL IN THE RED DRESS

Fiction by Gordon Booker

Richardson didn't see the girl in the red dress until it was too late. Until she was mashed against the front bumper of his BMW and tossed high in the air like a rag doll. His foot instinctively hit the brake pedal and he held it there as the tyres screeched, clawed, and smoked, smearing the surface of the small country road. He surged forward against his seat-belt, then slumped back again as the car slewed to a halt.

He sat for a momeot in the night silence, listening to his heart thumping. How fast had he been going? At least 60. But why oot? It was the middle of the night, for god's sake. There was no other traffic on the road. The girl had come out of nowhere. It was almost as if she had jumped right into the path of his car on purpose – a suicide. But who would believe that? Suddenly the panic hit him like a sledgehammer. How much had he had to drink at Clarissa's party?

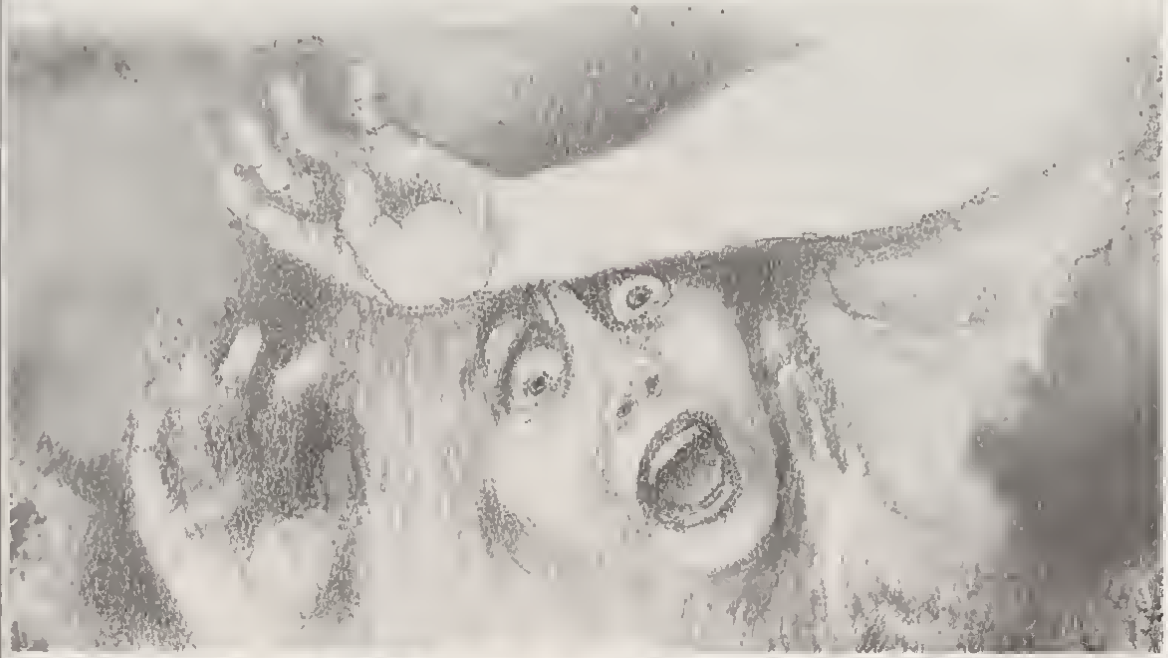
He could smell the drink on his own breath, mingled with the sweat of fear. The bile rose in his throat, as the nightmare scenario unfolded in his imagination. Three minutes ago he had been a successful stockbroker, returning home to London from a lavish house party in Sussex. Now he was a reckless drink-driver, a creature to be despised. He saw himself standing in court, his head bowed as the judge pronounced a sentence that would destroy his life as surely as he had wiped out the fragile existence of the girl in the red dress.

The girl! He frantically fished in the glove compartment for a torch, then opened the car door and stepped out onto the lonely road. His Rolex told him it was two-thirty in the morning. There were no lights on the horizon. He spread the bright beam of the torch across the front of his car, taking in the mangled bumper, and the bloody indentation in the bonnet caused by the girl's impacting head and upper body. That would cost him something to repair!

Moving down the road he swept the torch in wide arcs. There were empty fields on the right, an embankment bordered by high hedgerows on the left. A tattered sign pointing across the fields said 'Whitewood Sanitorium.' A flash of red caught his eye. The pale yellow beam picked out a figure sitting upright in the field, head lolling sideways at an impossible angle. Richardson gagged, the torch beam swaying as he put his other hand to his mouth and bit hard on the clenched knuckle. He didn't have to go any further to know she was dead. A slight breeze ruffled the corpse's long blonde hair. Her face was gone, or invisible under a mask of blood.

He snapped off the torch, stumbling backwards toward the safety of his car. His mind was in total confusion, struggling to blot out the events of the last five minutes. If he had only taken another road. And what was the girl doing out on a road like this in the middle of the night anyway? 'I had no chance to stop, officer. She came out of nowhere...' 'How fast were you travelling, sir? Would you mind breathing into this bag, please. I'm afraid I am going to have to ask you to come to the station for a few tests...'

He reached the vehicle and leaned against it as he collected his thoughts. It didn't take him long to make a decision. The girl was dead, and he had to get away, get far away. He knew somebody who could get the car repaired quickly, no questions asked if the price was right. Then there would be nothing to connect him with the incident. Moving swiftly now he had a purpose, he unlocked the boot, removed the bottle of water he kept to fill the radiator and emptied it over the bloody dent in the bonnet. Closing the boot again he surveyed his handiwork with the torch, then sank grate-



fully into the soft leather driver's seat, closed the door and gunned the engine, which purred to life instantly as if nothing at all had happened.

The dead thing in the field didn't look up as he went by, and as the miles passed its memory faded. Richardson pressed a button on the stereo and his world was filled with the soothing mellow tones of Nat King Cole singing 'Misty'. He reflected on his luck that neither of the headlights had been damaged by the impact. But he was still twenty miles or so from the safety of his mews garage, and if a police car spotted his vehicle in this condition, they would be almost certain to stop him and ask questions.

The miles crawled slowly by as countryside gave way to dual carriageways lit in ghastly yellow neon. He kept within the speed limit while other care passed him by, their bored passengers giving cursory glances at the BMW's crumpled bonnet. He hoped grimly that they didn't have a good memory for number plates, or the pale face at the windscreen. At one nerve-wrecking point he sported a flashing blue light behind him. The police car grew quickly in the rear mirror until it hurtled past like a screaming banshee and was gone into the night. In pursuit of some speeder, he reflected, or perhaps like him they were just in a hurry to get home.

The tape ran out and the radio came on, with a sleepy broadcaster playing bland selections from the BBC archives. The streets of London were deserted save for a few drunks and dossers, and it wasn't long before he turned into the small cobbled road leading to his mews garage. He activated the remote control for the door and drove in, immediately closing it behind him. He put the handbrake on and was just about to turn off the car engine when the voice on the redio cut through his feelings of relief.

'Police in the Sussex and Surrey areas are looking for a psychopathic killer who escaped from the top security Whitemore Mental Institution tonight after killing a guard and two patients. Eugene Edwards, whose victims are usually blonde-haired, is described as extremely dangerous and should not be approached under any circumstances.'

Whitewood Sanitorium! That was what the sign had said back there. What did this mean? Maybe an explanation as to why the girl had run blindly out in front of him. Pehaps she had been running from this man Edwards? But he hadn't seen anybody. Confused, he ren one hand through his short blonde hair – just as the butcher knife came through the back of the driver's seat and spilled his guts all over the comfortable leather upholstery.

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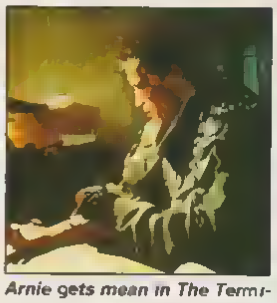
Dark Visions

The children of the night, what sweet music they make... DARK SIDE regular Maitland McDonagh puts his earplugs in and tunes in on things to come.

ARNIE'S BACK!

Arnold Schwarzenneger wasn't just making idle threats in *The Terminator* when he growled the classic line, 'I'll be back.' He will indeed return as the star of Terminator 2 though there's no word yet on how, given the condition he was in at the end of the first film Still when you're dealing with time travel just about anything is possible



Arnie gets mean in The Terminator

SON OF FX

Remember Australian macho man Bryan Brown in *F/X*, that ode to the ingenuity of special effects artists? Well, he's back in *F/X 2* scheduled for summer release in the States Directed by Richard (*Psycho 2*) Franklin and written by Bill Condon *F/X 2* will also feature Brian (*Bestseller*) Dennehy and Rachel (*Total Recall*) Ticotin. Brown reprises his role as effects artist Rollie Tyler who this time finds himself persuaded to use his talents to help trap a killer But there's more to the situation than meets the eye deceptions and double-crosses are the order of the day No word yet on who's going to handle the real effects

PREDATOR II

Schwarzenneger won't be returning for *Predator 2*, which is on 20th Century Fox's roster for Winter 1991 though extremely tall Kevin Peter Hall (who's sweated inside creature suits in such films as *Alien* and *Harry and the Hendersons*) is reprising his role as Stan Winston's very hostile sportsman from another planet While *Predator* took place in the literal jungle *Predator 2* – directed by Stephen Hopkins, of *A Nightmare on Elm Street V* – moves to the urban jungle where the hunter sights drug lords in his alien crosshairs Doesn't this sound a little like *I Come In Peace* aka *Dark Angel*? But then *Predator* was awfully reminiscent of the low budget (and deservedly obscure) *Without Warning* so chalk it up to what goes around comes around The cast includes Danny Glover, Gary Busey Mario Conchita Alonso, Bill Paxton and Robert Davi

Scenes from Predator 2

ALONG CAME A SPIDER

'Fess up, now were you really waiting with bated breath for the sequel to Bud Cardos' 1977 *Kingdom of the Spiders*, starring William Shatner? Just as well, since word comes now from former GoGo Boy Menachem Golan's 21st Century Pictures that *Kingsom of the Spiders II* which Shatner was to both direct and star in has been cancelled in the wake of *Arachnophobia* Not that a glut of movies on the same topic ever stopped a truly dedicated filmmaker just look at thre recent *Abyss*, *Deepstar Six*, *Leviathan* and *Lords of the Deep* run on "monsters threaten a bunch of people in an underwater substation pictures But this itsy-bitsy spider got squashed

FAMILY BUSINESS

Charles Addams' macabre cartoons were a staple of *The New Yorker* magazine In its prime witty offbeat and sometimes surprisingly gruesome He was a David Lynch for a gentler time sketching spooky vignettes that depicted a superficially conventional America crawling – sometimes literally – with weirdness His work inspired a television sitcom – *The Addams Family* – and has now spawned a movie due to start shooting in November Directed by Barry Sonnenfield, *The Addams Family* will star Anjelica Huston (fresh from her success as a cackling harpy in Nicholas Roeg's *The Witches*) and Raul Julia as suburban ghouls Morticia and Gomez Addams Carolyn Jones and John Astin originated the roles on television

THE DARK HALF

Word is out that George Romero is directing Stephen King's *The Dark Half* for Orion Pictures. Though two much publicised Romero/King collaborations foundered – *The Stand* never materialized and *Pet Sematary* came to the screen with Mary Lambert at the helm – *The Dark Half* is, for King, a surprisingly complex and subtle nightmare, drawn from his own experience writing under the pesudonym

'Richard Bachman'.

Like *Misery*, directed by Rob Reiner and due out later this year from Columbia Pictures – Reiner's *Stand By Me* (based on the short story, 'The Body') was one of the most successful King adaptations ever – *The Dark Half* deals directly with the relationship between the writer and his audience. But unlike *Misery*, in which a successful but frustrated romance novelist tries to kill off his wildly popular heroine so he can go back to work on his *real* writing only to find himself trapped and terrorized by his psychotic number one fan, *The Dark Half* plays with the idea that the fans aren't the really scary ones out there. Its protagonist finds himself haunted by his own alter ego "George Stark", the vicious author of a series of brutal crime novels who's graduated to producing brutal *crimes*. Ghosties and ghoulies are bad enough – an amoral killing machine with a razor and a grudge to settle is a real nightmare. And finishing up the King report: *It* is in production and *Graveyard Shift* due for a Halloween release from Paramount.

Stephen King will go to any lengths to sell his books

King on the set of PET SEMETARY

LUNCH ON CRONENBERG

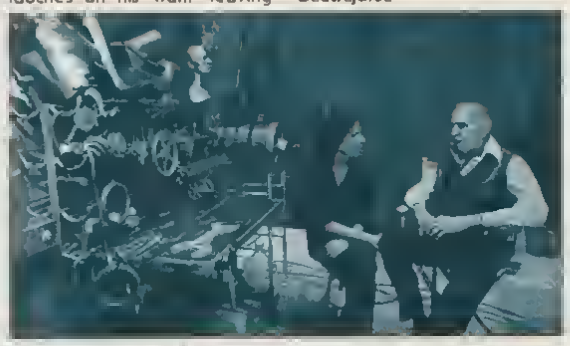
David Cronenberg's *Naked Lunch* based on the novel by William S. Burroughs is still moving ahead, with special effects supplied by Chris (*The Fly*) Walas. CWI Burroughs is living proof that no matter how creepy you are, if you hang around long enough you too can be an elder statesman. Junkie, sexual outlaw, Beat idol, libertine and all-round eccentric – for years he was probably best known for having accidentally maybe-on-purpose killed his wife while shooting an apple off her head – he's been valourized in recent years by the terminally cool, everybody from performance artist Laurie Anderson (who paid homage in "Sharkey's Day" and 'Sharkey's Night') to filmmaker Gus Van Zant (who cast him in *Drugstore Cowboy*) wants a piece of Burroughs. Cronenberg characterises *Naked Lunch* – whose plot defies description – as "a very mature, difficult film. Burroughs used science fiction and horror imagery but his writing is very literary and Swiftian, the syntax is totally non-linear. A lot of what I'm dealing in the movie with is the notion that writing is dangerous, the idea of having to live with what you create.

BURTON'S LATEST

Stan Winston is also the special effects mover and shaker behind Tim Burton's new project, *Edward Scissorhands*. As one would expect from the maker of *Pee Wee's Big Adventure*, *Beetlejuice* and *Batman*, the story – which Burton originated with Caroline Thompson, who wrote the screenplay – is a little odd. It's an updating of the *Frankenstein story* set in suburbia. Edward (Johnny Depp) is the creation of an eccentric inventor (Vincent Price, who never make another horror movie). Price) who dies before he can put the finishing touches on his work, leaving Edward with shears instead of hands. Elements of *Edward Scissorhands* echo Burton's earliest work, his short film *Frankenweenie* also updated Mary Shelley's classic story, recast as the tale of a boy who brings his dog back from the dead, and the eerie *Vincent* – a mood piece whose quirky sophisticated look anticipated *Beetlejuice* – featured Price's voice-over narration. *Edward Scissorhands'* cast also features Dianne Wiest (*The Lost Boys*), Winona Ryder, Anthony Michael Hall, Kathy Baker and Alan Arkin and the score is by Danny Elfman.

Beetlejuice

Edward Scissorhands



Vincent Price and Tim Burton

Edward Scissorhands

DARIO ARGENTO INTERVIEW

The macabre movies of Italian director Dario Argento are surrealistic rollercoaster rides into a universe of total terror, where anything can – and usually does – happen. Style is everything in Argento's blood-stained cinematic arias. His characters are eccentric, the plots usually indecipherable, but nobody can fault his bravaoro expertise with the camera, whether prowling the darkened corridors of a haunted ballet school (a-la SUSPIRIA), or climbing high in the rafters of an opera house (OPERA) as the eyes of a sinister Raven. Many of Argento's images are so remarkable that they remain indelibly burned into the impressionable minds of horror fans: scenes like Irene Miracle's eerie descent into an 'underwater room' at the beginning of INFERNO, or Tony Musante trapped by the automatic doors of an art gallery, a bug behind glass, unable to prevent the brutal knifing of a young woman in BIRD WITH THE CRYSTAL PLUMAGE.

These over-the-top images are usually complemented by excessive music. In SUSPIRIA, scored at an ear-shattering level by Argento's own group, Goblin, the soundtrack opens with a quiet 'Tubular Bells' type melody, then explodes into an unholy chorus chanting 'Witch!' as heroine Jessica Harper leaves the sanctuary of an airport lounge and heads into the stormy night. Other Argento pictures have utilised such diverse musical talents as Iron Maiden (CREEPERS) and Ennio Morricone (FOUR FLIES ON GREY VELVET), and the director has encouraged them to pump up the volume on their work...

Dario Argento directs a scene from 'OPERA'

A former film critic, who broke into the movies in the late 60s by writing screenplays for 'Dollar' western specialist Sergio Leone, Argento began in that uniquely European genre that the Italians refer to as giallo, or 'yellow' films, meaning naturalistic horror thrillers in the PSYCHO vein. He then cracked the supernatural horror market in a big way with SUSPIRIA, his most popular film to date. It is this movie that is primarily responsible for the huge cult following Argento has built up over the years.

In recent times Argento has turned to producing horror hits like DEMONS, the story of a Berlin cinema invaded by bloodlusting zombies who come out of the screen to attack the audience, and the THE CHURCH, an occult chiller directed by his protege Michele Soavi. The latter has yet to be seen in this country, and the same goes for OPERA, Argento's most offbeat work to date. He also wrote and directed this stylish terror tale about a

psychopath stalking the cast of a Rome production of MACBETH. This picture reveals Argento at his outrageous best, particularly in the brutal murder sequences: in one scene a girl swallows a vital bit of evidence, only to have it hacked out of her oesophagous by the knife-wielding maniac (the camera dives in the victim's mouth, and exits from the gaping throat wound!); in another, somebody gets a bullet through the head in excruciating slow motion. Needless to say the film has had censorship problems in many countries, and is only likely to make it to these shores in a heavily cut version.

In person, Argento turns out to be a pale, thin-faced man with a friendly manner and piercing eyes that gaze keenly out from beneath a thick crop of uncombed hair. He looks a lot younger than his fifty years, and speaks quite good English in a hesitant fashion. This interview was conducted while he was over in London to appear at the famed 'Shock Around The Clock' film festival and introduce TWO EVIL EYES (released by Medusa Video this month), the Edgar Allan Poe chiller he collaborated on with George Romero.

Valdemar awakes in '2 Evil Eyes'

DARK SIDE: Who has influenced you most as a filmmaker?

ARGENTO: Many critics in my early days described me as the Italian Hitchcock. But my main influences go back to the days of German expressionistic cinema – to Fritz Lang and Carl Dreyer. Dreyer's VAMPYR made a big impact on me. The first horror movie I saw with my family was THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA with Claude Rains. I was very scared then, and it made me want to go and see many, many horror films. The HOUSE OF WAX was another favourite, with that mask crumbling away to reveal Vincent Price's scarred face...

A rabid cinema patron from 'DEMONS'

DARK SIDE: Would you class yourself as a horror fanatic?

ARGENTO: I'm a fanatic, yes! I still love horror movies, anything that is strange and makes you think. Did you see WILD AT HEART? (he smiles) It was good. Very nice. A very sweet film I think, and gentle. Even if you don't like, it's different.

DARK SIDE: How did you get into making movies in the first place?

ARGENTO: Sergio Leone was a friend of mine, and so was Bernardo Bertolucci. We were the new young hopefuls of Italian cinema. So Sergio said to Bernardo and I, 'Why don't you write me a screenplay?' We worked for six months together and wrote ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST, which was a very big success. I went on to write another picture called FIVE MAN ARMY, with Peter Graves. It was a happy period. We had many hopes. Sadly, Sergio is now dead, and Italian cinema is not good, because there is only one Italian cinema group. You don't stay in the group and you don't make a picture...

DARK SIDE: Your first film as a director was BIRD WITH THE CRYSTAL PLUMAGE...

ARGENTO: Yes. I was very young, I think 26, when I made that. When the distributors first saw it, they said 'It is terrible. Nobody will want to see this picture!' They said it was not suspenseful enough, and it should be more like Hitchcock. But I told them I had to stick to my own style. Of course it became a very big success both in Italy and America, so after that they did not offer me any more advice.

DARK SIDE: What came next?

ARGENTO: A film called THE CAT O' NINE TAILS, which was another giallo, with Karl Malden as a blind man who helps track down a killer. I was interested in exploring some very realistic violence in this one. There is a scene where somebody is crushed to death in the workings of a lift, which is a very plausible occurrence. Then I made a movie called FOUR FLIES ON GREY VELVET, starring Michael Brandon as a rock band drummer who witnesses a murder. The title comes from an experiment performed by the police upon the retina of one of the victim's eyes. By aiming a laser beam through it, they hope to capture the last image the victim saw – which looks like 'four flies on grey velvet...'

Argento goes to great lengths to get people to watch his movies

DARK SIDE: I believe yon aleo made a picturs called FIVE DAYS tN MILAN that has yet to be released anywhere.

ARGENTO: This was not a horror film. tt wae ehown In Italy in t973, a biack comedy with historical elements. It would be of no interest to your rsaders I am eure.

DARK SIDE: Unlike DEEP RED...

ARGENTO: DEEP RED ie my favourite film. The character that David Hemmings pleys In the movie (a writer who witneases a grisly murder and then is pursued by the killer) is very much based on my own personality. Nat that I have witncased any murders lately, you understand! It wae a very etrong fiim, very brutal, and of course the censor was upset. It was cut by almost an hour In eome countries, but the complete version etill piays in Italy.

Opera – a stabbing pain in the throat

DARK SIDE: SUSPIRIA came next, and wae a bit of a change of pace for you...

Opera – when Dario says 'cut' he means it!

ARGENTO: I was always intereeted in the supernatural. I spent much time travelling around Enrope with Daria (Nicolidi, the ex-Mrs Argento, and etar of many of his fiime), and we came across a etrange community in Switzerlaud called the Rudolph Steiner Community, which was set up in a very large house. They studied Rhythms, dance and magic there, and that piace became tbe inepiration fur SUSPIRIA.

DARK SIDE: SUSPIRIA and its followup, INFERNO, both have a richly colourful look about them, almost as If they were made in another age. How did you achieve thie?

ARGENTO: I used out-dated Kodak stock, which was then processed in a unique way. You can alter the film in the iab by these meaue. The eame process wee used in the 19S0s on pictures iike WAR DF THE WORLDS. Unfortunately there is no more of the film stock left, so that's it...

Opera – the film we're raven about

DARK SIDE; Why haven't we seen many Dario Argento movies lately?

ARGENTD: Beeauae my iaet picture, OPERA, was picked up by Orion pictures and they decided not to rslcase It. Why they do not rslease it, I do uot know! tu Italy It was very popuiar. They retitled it TERRDR AT THE OPERA, which was idiotic but I accept thie. But they spend money tu buy this picture and then they don't show it – why? Maybe it'e too cruel. DPERA is a very cruel picturs, very etrong. Personally, for me it was the most difficult film of my life to make. There were many complicated movements with the camere. I will be sad if it does uot ehow in Englaud. We will have to wait to see what happene. But you can see a ecene from the film in NIKITA. Director Luc Besson, who is a very nice person and a good friend, bought one scene from my DPERA ta use in the backgrouud. Of course people who see the film over here will not know what the scene is from.

DARK StDE: Let'e talk about TWO EVIL EYES. Teli us why you decided to do euch a well known Poe etory ae THE BLACK CAT?

ARGENTO: I like the etory! t know it has been dane before, many times, by

Argento deals with the censor

filmmakers I admire like Roger Corman. But today, for the fifth time we make the story famous. I wanted to make something different, more up to date. Edgar Allan Poe is always presented in the past, while here we have brought the story to modern times. It is a softer picture than I usually make. it's very soft and sensual. We got compliments from the censor – which was terrible!

DARK SIDE: It's still very violent in places though, more violent than the Romero sequence anyway...

ARGENTO: Thank you! (he smiles). The effects on TWO EVIL EYES are very good, by Tom Savini, who is a genius, a wonderful artist. A wonderful person as well. For months we would sit in the night and drink a beer together. Now Tom is making his own version of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. It will be good I think. George says, I must not make my episode too violent, because it will be too different from his. So I changed my style. If I made it again I would make it differently. I like to have more blood. But

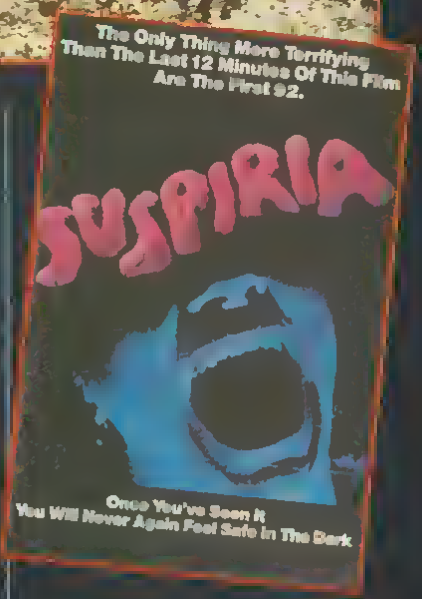
Urbano Barbarini gets the bird in 'OPERA'

Edgar Allan Poe is classic. I am a fan of his writing. I remember the first time I read Poe was when i was ten years old, and naturally it was the first weird, strange thing I had read in my life. When you are very young and you read something like this, something changes in your life. You are still normal, but you become curious to know about terrifying things. We were originally going to film three or four episodes, but there were so many problems with the other directors that George and I decided to do it together.

Bathtime for the heroine of CREEPERS

DARK SIDE; Of course this marks the second time you have worked with George Romero on a movie, the first being DAWN OF THE DEAD...

ARGENTO: Ah yes, ZOMBIE! That was also a very happy collaboration for me, because George is a wonderful man and fine director. I wrote the screenplay with him in Rome, then went to watch him shoot the picture. George did ask me if I would like to become involved with DAY OF THE DEAD as well, but unfortunately i was already working on shooting CREEPERS.



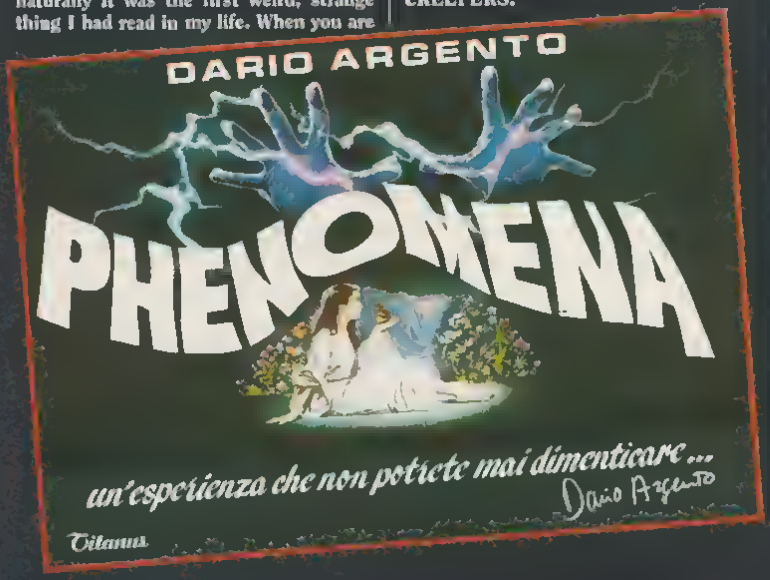
DARK SIDE: Did you have censorship problems on DAWN?

ARGENTO: It was cut almost everywhere it was shown! In France it was returned to the censor eight times, and each time they took out a little more. In the end there was very little left. The longest version was shown in Italy, but that was only slightly longer than the American version. The American version was good.

DARK SIDE: You usually write your own movies. Where do you get your weird ideas from?

ARGENTO: My ideas come from my nightmares. But writing them down is not easy. It is the longest part of my work, and takes me many months, over which I may change many things, write many different drafts before arriving at a final screenplay.

DARK SIDE: You have had some very unusual music in your movies...



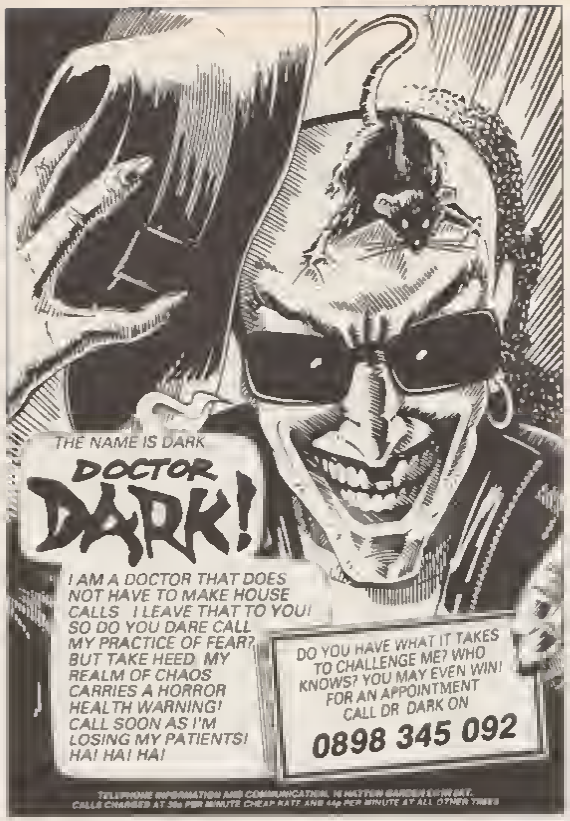
THE FILMS OF DARIO ARGENTO

1968: CDMMANDDS. Wrote screenplay.
1968: THE LDVE CIRCLE. Wrote screenplay.
1969: BATTLE DF THE CDMMANDDS. Wrote screenplay.
1969: DNCE UPDN A TIME IN THE WEST (CIC Video). Wrote screenplay.
1969: TDDAY IT'S ME... TDMDRROW YDU! Wrote screenplay.
1970: FIVE MAN ARMY. Wrote screenplay
1970: BIRD WITH THE CRYSTAL PLUMAGE (also known as THE GALLERY MURDERS). Directed and wrote screenplay.
1970: DNE NIGHT AT DINNER. Directed and wrote screenplay.
1971: CAT D' NINE TAILS. (Warner Home Video) Directed and wrote screenplay.
1972: FDUR FLIES DN GREY VELVET. Directed and wrote screenplay.
1973: LE CINQUE GIDRNATE (FIVE DAYS IN MILAN). Directed and wrote screenplay.
1976: DEEP RED. Directed and wrote screenplay.
1977: SUSPIRIA (Entertainment In Video). Directed, and wrote screenplay and music.
1980: DAWN DF THE DEAD (Entertainment In Video). Wrote music.
1981: INFERND (CBS Fox Video). Directed and wrote screenplay.
1982: TENEBRAE (also known as UNSANE). Directed, wrote screenplay and music.
1985: CREEPERS (also known as PHENDMENA – Palace Video). Directed and wrote screenplay.
1986: DEMDNS. Produced and wrote screenplay.
1986: DARID ARGENTO'S WDRLD DF HDRRDR. (Documentary directed by Micheie Soavi).
1987: DEMDNS 2. Produced.
1987: DPERA (also known as TERRDR IN THE DPERA). Directed and wrote screenplay.
1988: THE CHURCH. Produced.
1990: TWD EVIL EYES (Medusa). Directed and wrote screenplay.
1991: THE SECT. Produced.

ARGENTO: Music is very important to me. I like to make changes with each new film. In CREEPERS, for example, I wanted to have every scene with music by a different composer. So, Bill Wyman would do the opening scene where the first girl was murdered in the Swiss mountains, then for another we would have a heavy metal group like Motorhead, and then Simonetti. It made the film more interesting, I think. At one time I would always write and play my own music with my group, Goblin. It is finished now, but for six years it was wonderful, because my group could make all the music for my films. The music for SUSPIRIA is the most popular, but I like DEEP RED very much, also TENEBRAE.

DARK SIDE: What are you working on at the moment?

ARGENTO: I am about to produce a picture called THE SECT, with Michele Soavi, who did THE CHURCH. But I will not start shooting another picture as director before next summer. I like to write slowly. I need time to reflect and decide, to make things better. I started to write now, and we will be ready to start shooting next summer. Now I have only an idea. It will be horror.. I want to make some psycho film, like my DEEP RED. Now I am enjoying myself in London. I really love this city. I have many friends here. When the fascists come to power in Italy I will come to London to stay.



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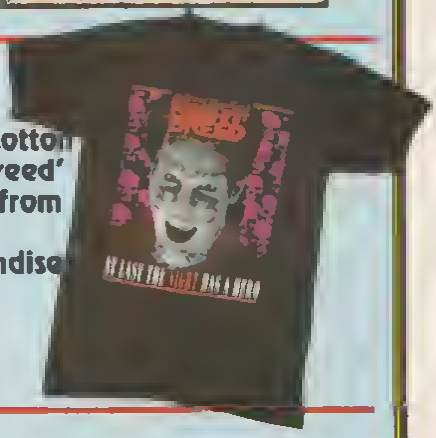

In Clive Barker's shattered mindscape,
In the darkest pits of Hell,
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There foul creatures love to dwell.

We have voyaged down the lost ways
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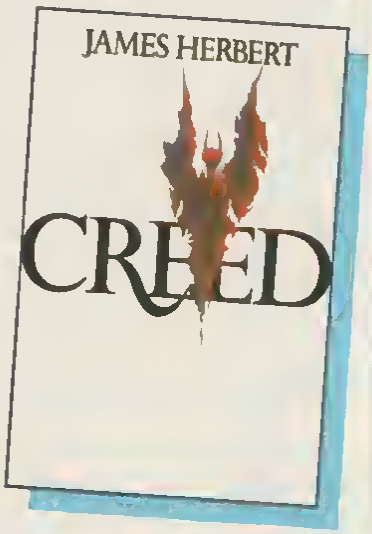
PRINTS OF DARKNESS

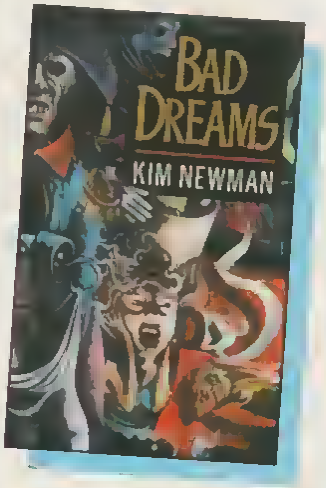
John Brosnan explains why he hasn't yet joined the Stephen King or James Herbert fan clubs...

As, in the past, I've been less kind to some of James Herbert's previous novels, he is under the impression that instead of just doing a reviewer's job of expressing an honest opinion I belong to a mysterious group of critics who, for some reason, have an irrational dislike of both him and his work. This is not true, of course, but I've given up trying to argue otherwise.

Anyway, Herbert's suspicions of my motives are unlikely to be changed when I say that I rather liked his latest effort, *Creed* (Hodder and Stoughton, £12.95). The reason is that he's adopted a different and more relaxed style for this one, it being a kind of send-up of the genre. Joe Creed, the protagonist, is a photographer for a tabloid newspaper who, while taking surreptitious photographs at the funeral of an old actress, shoots something he shouldn't have and brings down on his head the unwanted attention of evil forces.

There's plenty of the usual gratuitous sex and violence before we arrive at a rather amusing climax, but what made this novel most appealing to me was Joe Creed himself. Herbert keeps emphasizing what a sleaze-ball Creed is supposed to be but to me he comes across as the most convincing and *likeable* character to appear in any of Herbert's novels.





From a relative newcomer on the horror scene, Kim Newman, comes *Bad Dreams* (Simon and Schuster, £13.95). Like his previous novel *The Night Mayor* (reviewed in the first issue), this one plunges you into a world of alternate realities where nothing is what it seems. Anne Nielson, an American living in London, attempts to investigate the circumstances of her younger sister's sordid death and walks into a trap prepared by the Monster, a would-be immortal being whose 'kind' is the basis of the legend of the vampire. He not only sucks the life out of his victims but traps their souls within him in the nightmarish Dream.

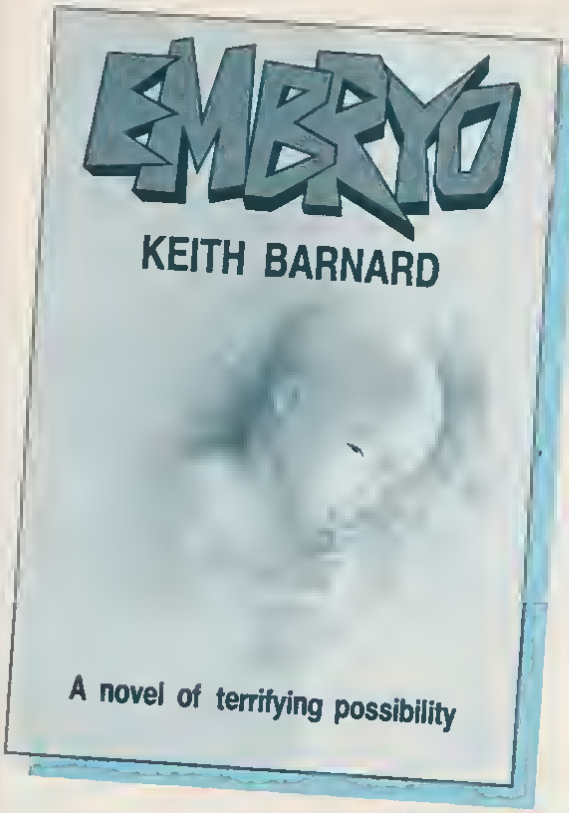
The Monster, who goes by many names, is carrying out a vendetta against Anne's family that began with her father, a once-famous playwright and later hack movie scriptwriter. Like *The Night Mayor*, *Bad Dreams* is chock-full of movie references and I'm beginning to have my doubts about the wisdom of this. While they create convenient visual references for the reader they also remind the reader of the artificiality of what they are reading. Then again, Newman's intention with these two novels might be to show how the images of popular cinema now completely permeate our collective consciousness (though he does have Anne say at one point: "If you watch too many old movies, you'll cripple your imagination.") Anyway, recommended.

Another British newcomer is Mark Morris, whose first novel is *Toady* (Corgi, £4.99). Morris has obviously been inspired by Stephen King, not only is this reminiscent of King's *It*, it is also very long (702 pages). Set in a seaside town, it's about four teenage youths who hold a seance in a creepy derelict house (in *King* Street) and unleash the sort of nasty things that tend to get unleashed when you hold seances in creepy, derelict houses. If I'm making this sound derivative and unoriginal I don't mean to; *Toady* touches lots of the familiar horror signposts along the way but veers off into unexpected areas as it progresses. For a first novel I think Morris has tried to pack in too much (I could have done without all the wonky metaphysics which is supposed to explain the nature of the Beast) but overall it's an impressive debut.

Embryo (Souvenir Press, £14.95) is by a third horror newcomer this month. Keith Barnard is a real-life doctor who has written a British version of the sort of novels that the American writer/doctor, Robin Cook, has specialised in over the years (*Coma*, etc) where a young medico at some hospital gets suspicious about something, such as a lot of patients disappearing or having their brains removed and so on, and proceeds to uncover a large and nasty medical conspiracy. Here the Brit doctor slowly uncovers a nasty but quite small medical conspiracy. And Dr Barnard has not been well served by his publishers who have revealed on the jacket flap on the book the entire plot, including the exact nature of the nasty conspiracy!

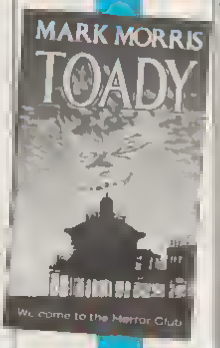
The novel begins well when young Dr Simon Robinson, who works in the gynaecology depth of a Bournemouth hospital, is doing a routine ultrasound scan on a young pregnant woman and sees, to his horror, the head of the foetus turn and give him a malign smile. Things later go terribly wrong when he blacks out while he is performing an abortion on the woman and he severely injures her. After that, the report on the malformed foetus disappears, and then the murders begin. To add to his troubles the doctor's wife becomes pregnant and there are signs that her foetus is far from normal too.

Spooky stuff, but Barnard can't sustain the tension and it all kind of falls apart towards the end (not helped by the ending being given away on the jacket flap). The main flaw is that it starts off as if it's going to be a supernatural horror story but the



relatively mundane medical rationale isn't sufficient to explain the weirdness of the preceding events. He has got his genres mixed up here. But I'm a sucker for medical horror stories and Barnard is good with both the all-important medical background and the horror set-pieces. A fairly good start and I look forward to his next work when hopefully he will have worked out the kinks in his plotting technique. In the meantime, Dr Barnard, don't give up the day job.

The SF contribution this month is rather disappointing. I've been a long-time fan of Bob Shaw but his latest, *Orbitsville Judgement* (Gollancz, £13.95), left me luke-warm. This is the third volume in the trilogy concerning Orbitsville, a vast hollow world that encloses a star and is millions of miles in diameter. Built by unknown aliens it is made of an equally unknown material only a few centimetres in thickness. Its interior is habitable, with soil, rivers, mountains etc., and humanity is slowly spreading across it. This book is supposed to conclude the saga but does so in a way which leaves you feeling vaguely cheated. Vast forces (intelligent galaxies/God?) perform miraculous feats in the climactic sequences for reasons that seem purely arbitary. We get an explanation of sorts of what Orbitsville was for but it's not very satisfactory. As usual, Bob Shaw's characters are both solid and interesting. I would have preferred it if he'd concentrated more on them than on the dubious celestial mechanics that dominate in the last third of his book ▶



DISCOVER
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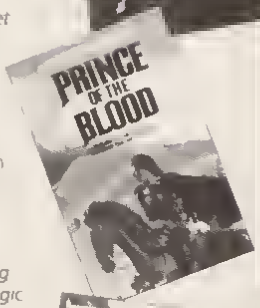

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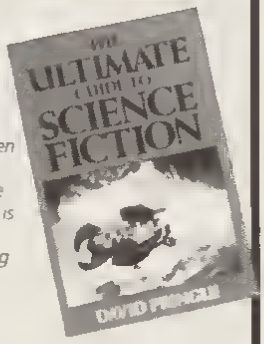

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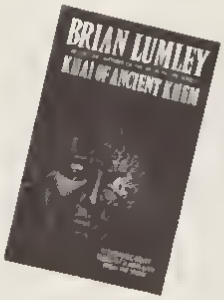

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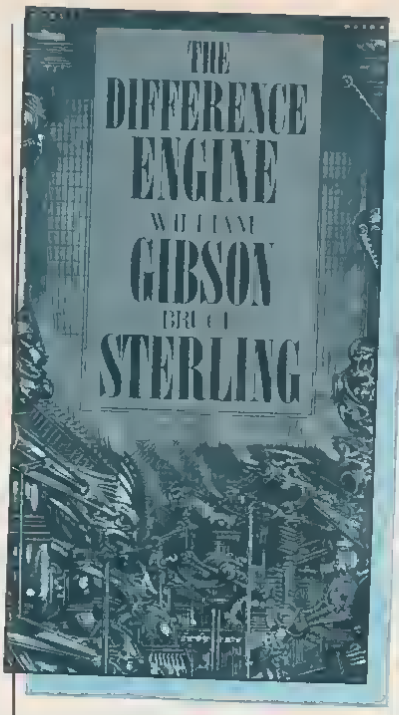
Next we have *The Difference Engine* (Gollancz, £13.95) by those two kings of cyber-punkery, William Gibson and Bruce Sterling. Now I must confess I have no idea what this book is supposed to be *about*. I know it's set in an alternate world London of 1855 where the computer world has arrived a century ahead of its time, thanks to Sir Charles Babbage perfecting his mechanical computer, the Analytic Engine. It's a complex, densely-plotted novel that clearly works on all sorts of levels, it's packed with incident and colourful characters, many of them real historical figures from our world, but at the end of it all I was asking, "What does it all mean?" I am not alone in this – I have asked other people that question and they have also been unable to explain. Ironically, I spoke to William Gibson about it when he was in London recently to promote the book but, alas, at that time I hadn't yet read it so I wasn't able to ask him the crucial question. I did learn that he and Sterling had been discussing the idea since back in 1983 and collaborated on it by swapping computer discs back and forth by mail. "We tried to do it by modem but it just didn't work," confesses the man who invented computer cyberspace. "I can't imagine a more thorough collaboration," he continued. "It's very hard to look at it now and pick out bits that either of us wrote. The tricky bit was finding the thing's style of voice. It didn't fly for me until I heard it talking in its own diction." Yes, the Babbage Analytic Engine itself is telling the story in the book but

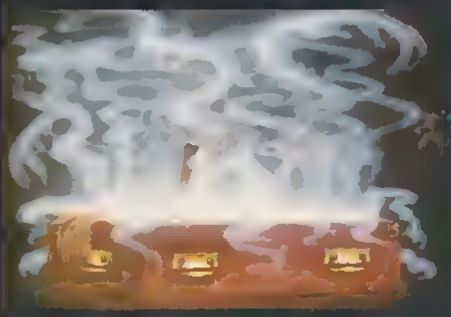


even knowing that didn't help me any.

Speaking of cyberspace, I asked Gibson if he would be writing any more novels in the electronic vein of *Neuromancer*, *Count Zero* and *Mona Lisa Overdrive*. "I think I've finished with the world of those three novels. But it's been very interesting in the last few years watching people develop 'cyberspace'. I've been watching that 'virtual reality' technology very closely and I think the next book I do will be to attempt to figure out what that would actually be like. It's not going to be like the cyberspace I've described but very different, and very exciting."

Finally, a book that tells you everything and more than you've ever wanted to know about Stephen King. It's called *The Stephen King Companion* (Macdonald, £13.95) and is edited by George Beahm. Headings for the various sections include: 'The Long, Strange Trip of Stephen King: An Overview', 'The Author Talks: King on Writing', 'An Evening with Stephen King', 'The House that Horror Built' (Yes, a guided tour, with photographs, around the King mansion), 'A Self-Quiz: Rating Yourself as a King Fan' (good grief!) and loads of articles about the novels as well as a bibliography and filmography. Buy this book, read it then go on Mastermind with Stephen King as your chosen subject and you stand a good chance of winning. My favourite section was the one on King's fan mail. Two choice samples: "All I want is for someone to tell me that I'm a lousy writer who should stop wasting his time or that I have some potential and should keep trying. PS: If there is nothing you can do, send money." And: "Really, Steve, THE SHINING, is a masterpiece considering the fact it was written by an American hack, and I congratulate you."

RICHARD
LAYMON



THE STAKE

A horror novelist discovers a corpse in a coffin with a stake through her heart. Is she really a vampire, or merely the unfortunate victim of murder? And what happens when – if – the stake is pulled out?

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'Stephen King without a conscience'
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Fear

HEADLINE

FUNLAND

Children are disappearing. The 'trolls' – a growing army of bums – are preying on them. When a group of teenagers discover their own 'solution', it leads inexorably to the old abandoned Funhouse, where the appalling truth awaits . . .

Paperback £4.50

COMPUTER SLAYGROUND

Christmas is looming and the humans are getting fat. But what's happening in the dark recesses of your computer screen? Chris Knight finds out...

COWABUNGA!

No mention of the Festive Season this year would be complete without at least some mention of those heroes in half shells, the Tennage Mutant Hera Turnips oops, sorry Turtles Bearing that in mind, come walk with me a little in the sewers of New York and be prepared for some fearsome foul play in the process

The release of Turtles – The Computer Game, has been timed to perfection by Southwark based Mirrorsoft appearing as it will on all of the major computer formats just in time for the Christmas market

All in all the game looks set to be just as epic as the film video cartoon, bum-bag pencil, pencil-sharpener, model the list goes on and if you care not to take part then skip a few paragraphs Otherwise adhere to the age old adage 'If you can't beat 'em, join em! and take note as the plot thickens.

April O Neil journalist extraordinaire and turtle lover, has been kidnapped by that infamous maniac The Shredder Whas ganna save her? It's na good calling on the Ghostbusters, I mean, they're not for real are they? No, this is giang ta take someane special someane like... a Teenage Mutant Hero Turtle!

On your way to the rescue you will encounter some pretty horrid adversaries, such as the mischievious Mousers, who infest the dank city sewers, the terrorist team of Bepop and Rocksteady, and some pretty nasty villains to be found in the polluted urban rivers

All of this may sound just a little like any other offering of oriental bearing, with munchukus a-whizzing and samurai swords a-slicing. What makes the game stand head and shoulders above the others, however is the fourfold nailbiting gameplay

In order to effect the rescue you must assume the role of all four turtles Donatella Michelangela Rafaella and Leonarda At all times, you must keep a check on each turtle's progress matching them up against the ever changing enemy

This is na easy task especially as you have to use those reptilian brains to map out strategies and locate secret sewage passages

Teenage Mutant Hera Turtles is a brilliantly put together adventure The graphics are stunning and the action is non-stop over six levels as you battle to reach the Shredder's lair

GREMLINS 2

Continuing our horror in a more lighthearted vein those monstrous Gremlins are back in yet another computer game licence taken from the film If you've seen the movie then the plot will be familiar, if not here goes

Fluffy, cuddly Gizma is back in the possession of old Mr Wing in Chinatown and things are certainly looking cosy Hang on a minute though there's a nasty property developer about who wants to turn Chinatown into a huge real estate development

Mr Wing will have nothing to do with this of course, but Mr Wing then proceeds to die very conveniently making way for the development, and leaving Gizma in the genetics laboratory of the new development Clamp Plaza Well, all new developments have a genetics laboratory, don't they?

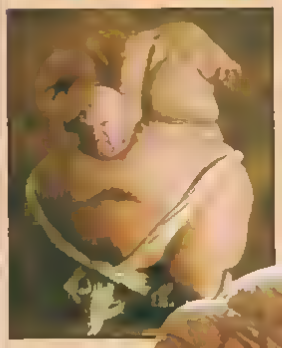
Anyway, you can guess most of the rest Billy Peltzer Gizma's former owner is working in the Plaza and, whilst attempting to rescue his cuddly friend, Gizma gets wet, the Magwai appear and after some fun and games with the Plaza's fire sprinkler, system the Gremlins are back in business

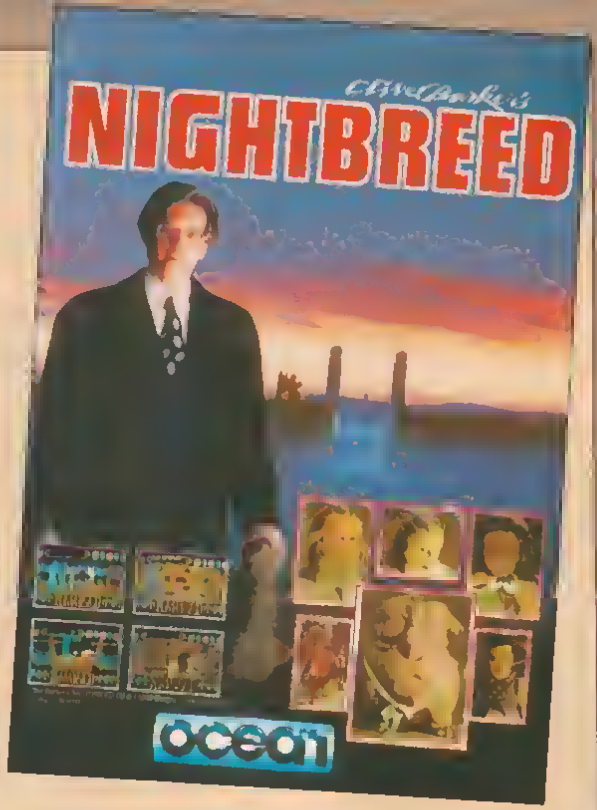
Forget the plot and just wade on in there The Gremlins are there for the killing and you've got to do it quick, before New York is taken over

Using boomerangs, telephones torches mega-torches and tomatoes, knock hell out of the many characters in this excellent game Watch out for Electric, the livewire Gremlin charged with a zillion watts of pure power, Sexygirl, who's kisses are fatal and Skateboard, who will run you down sooner than spit on you

Pick up as many bonuses as you can to buy more ammunition in the shop at the end of each round, and make sure you complete each end-of-level bonus game or the Gremlins will triumph.

For endless fun and sheer playability, Gremlins 2 must form a part of your Christmas list





THE NIGHTBREED

Yes the humour is over There s no time for humour now as we enter the nightmare of the subterranean city of Midian

The Nightbreed is a race of exotic and horrifying creatures and monstrous deities which has remained hidden from Mankind for centuries in its underground dwellings Things are about to change and you d better believe that this is pure horror at its best

You are Boone a man accused of a series of brutal killings and pursued by the cops and a psychopathic assassin alike Where does your flight lead you? into the bowels of the Earth and the arms of the Nightbreed

In fact, to coincide with the monstrous movie of the same name, there are not one, but two games being released from Ocean, both of which should appeal to your terror taste buds

Both games include over 30 types of monsters sub-divided into different species like Big Fly, Fatman, Snakeman, the Berserkers, Flying Teeth, Head Monster, Roof Crawler, Hopper Scorpion Man and Eyeball Monster

Yep they re all here vomiting poisonous bile, punching kicking and emitting dangerous rays against superbly colourful backdrops and utilising marvellous graphics

Nightbreed The Interactive Movie involves 10 stunning arcade sequences closely following the plot of the film and has you following pre-set orders to advance in the game

After fleeing underground, your task is to defend Midian against the murderous 'Sons of the Free', and the hazards you face include police road blocks the skilful, knife-throwing of the MASK, the razor-sharp teeth of the flying Manata Rays and the pitfalls too numerous to mention in the worlds of monsters

The arcade style gameplay must be approached with a fair amount of strategy If you want to survive But despite the pre-set format of the game, it still allows more than enough of a challenge to keep you coming back for more

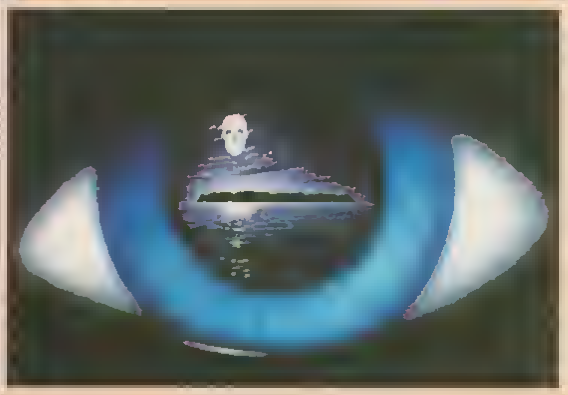
Second comes the Arcade Action Game

To succeed here you must hunt around the screen to find keys, defeat the infamous MASK net yourself baptised by the gruesome god of the Nightbreed Baphomet, enter a chamber of Berserkers, free the Breed from the surface of Midian and then take on the MASK one more time in the ultimate battle

This is much much more than your run of the mill shoot-em-up To succeed you must outwit the enemy at all times, using hidden pieces on the screen to create keys, enabling you to skip parts of the game and come closer to your final objective

With the ability to change forms and become man/monster later on in the game the sheer variety of the action will hold your interest for a long, long time in a veritable feast of blood, gore and death

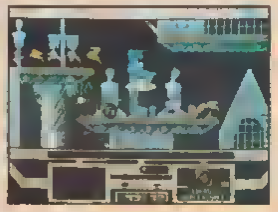
THE KILLING GAME SHOW



THE KILLING GAME SHOW

Talking of entertainment, Psygnosis has come up with something that will have your toes curling in disgust and terror as you witness the top-rated media show of the future

Similar to the Running Man, the Killing Game Show has been devised to do away with nasty anarchists and opposers of the State, whilst providing a good spectacle for the masses but in comparison The Running Man looks like Childrens Hour on a wet Sunday afternoon



The scenario On eight custom-built satellites circling the Earth, the giant company 21st Century has set up 16 Pits of Death Each of these pits contains a nice selection of HALFs Hostile Artificial Life Forms specially created by scientists to kill

Your task as Carl, is to become a contestant and battle your way out of each and every one of these pits It's survival or death here in any number of unpleasant ways

To make matters just a touch more entertaining, each pit is slowly pumped full of DOLL, or Deadly Organic Life Liquid The horrible HALFs don't mind it at all, but wait till it starts burning your skin away and you'll soon find renewed strength to climb higher

Had enough? Then get a hold of this Those awfully generous people at 21st Century don't want you to get disheartened too quickly, so they've provided you with some limited-protection body armour How nice

To wear this, your body needs some slight alteration however Here we go, off comes the lower half your body from the groin down then your flesh is stripped from your bones, sometimes under anaesthetic, and replaced by a malleable metallic element How sweet of them

Ready to roll? Now it's all up to you Make the most of any ammunition you may find lying around and solve the intricate puzzles before you as quickly as possible If the HALFs don't get you, the DOLL will as it seeps slowly up the pit

If, perchance you should fail in your task and be sure that you will on many occasions, take a look at the action replay option to see where you went wrong and start all over again

The concept of the Killing Game Show is incredibly simple and yet quakingly terrifying To think that our sweet and pleasant world could originate things like that Hmm!

LEGEND OF FAERGHAIL

Moving from out of the frying pan and into the fire, terror is replaced by mystery in the magical world of Faerghail a world where elves and men are at war without reason a world where ill fortune strikes at the weak unawares, a world where Mankind seems doomed to live at the whim of evil, unless you think you can do something to stop the rot

Before we start, I should explain that Faerghail is a game of such complexity that you'll need to spend some time poring over the manual before you eve think about switching on

If you've ever played around with Dungeons and Dragons, or other role-playing games, you should have a fair idea of what's involved here Otherwise, get to grips with character creation of all races trades and skills and be sure to put together a band of adventurers worthy enough to take on this incredibly challenging quest.

The land of Thyn is under constant attack by the elves, who have sold themselves to evil The only way for the country to survive is for you and your merry band to forge a way to the neighbouring land of Cyldane and recruit more troops It's a quest well worth undertaking but along the way be prepared for some breathtaking action and more than a few load/save sessions before you get there

Choose your own character looking carefully to his/her many attributes such as strength dexterity, alignment and so on, then continue to pick out some travelling companions Your travels will take you over an immense medieval world, with two countries divided by mountain ranges Explore the Dwarf mines of Khazad Moran, investigate the Temple of the Dragon's Servants and try to discover the reason behind the elves madness.

Just as in real role playing adventures, you decide what is going to happen next Do you attack the band of warriors that's just come around the next corner? Do you try and make friends?

All in all, you will encounter 80 different intelligent adversaries ranging from fire breathing dragons to opportunist bandits who will try a daring raid if you get shut out of the towns at nightfall

Try and learn the different languages of the Swarves and Elves and for real underground adventure try out the 8 separate dungeon levels, crammed with danger and beasts lurking in the dark

The ultimate task, of course, is to get to the bottom of this whole affair of the evil Elves, Find the dark lord behind their misery, free their tormented souls and liberate the land of Faerghail from condemnation to eternal misery

This is adventure at its best, with startling graphics and superb sound effects creating a spellbinding atmosphere that will be hard to break out of

For Amiga users there is also the added bonus of being able to import characters you may already have created for games such as Bard's Tale and Phantasie For sheer interactivity, this makes Faerghail even harder to beat

Title	Software House
Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles	Image Works 071 928 1454
Gremlins 2	Elite 0922 55852
The Nighbreed	Ocean 061 832 6633
The Killing Game Show	Psygnosis 051 709 5755
The Legend of Faerghail	Rainbow Arts 021 702 2323

Revolver HORROR SPECIAL

Hubble bubble!
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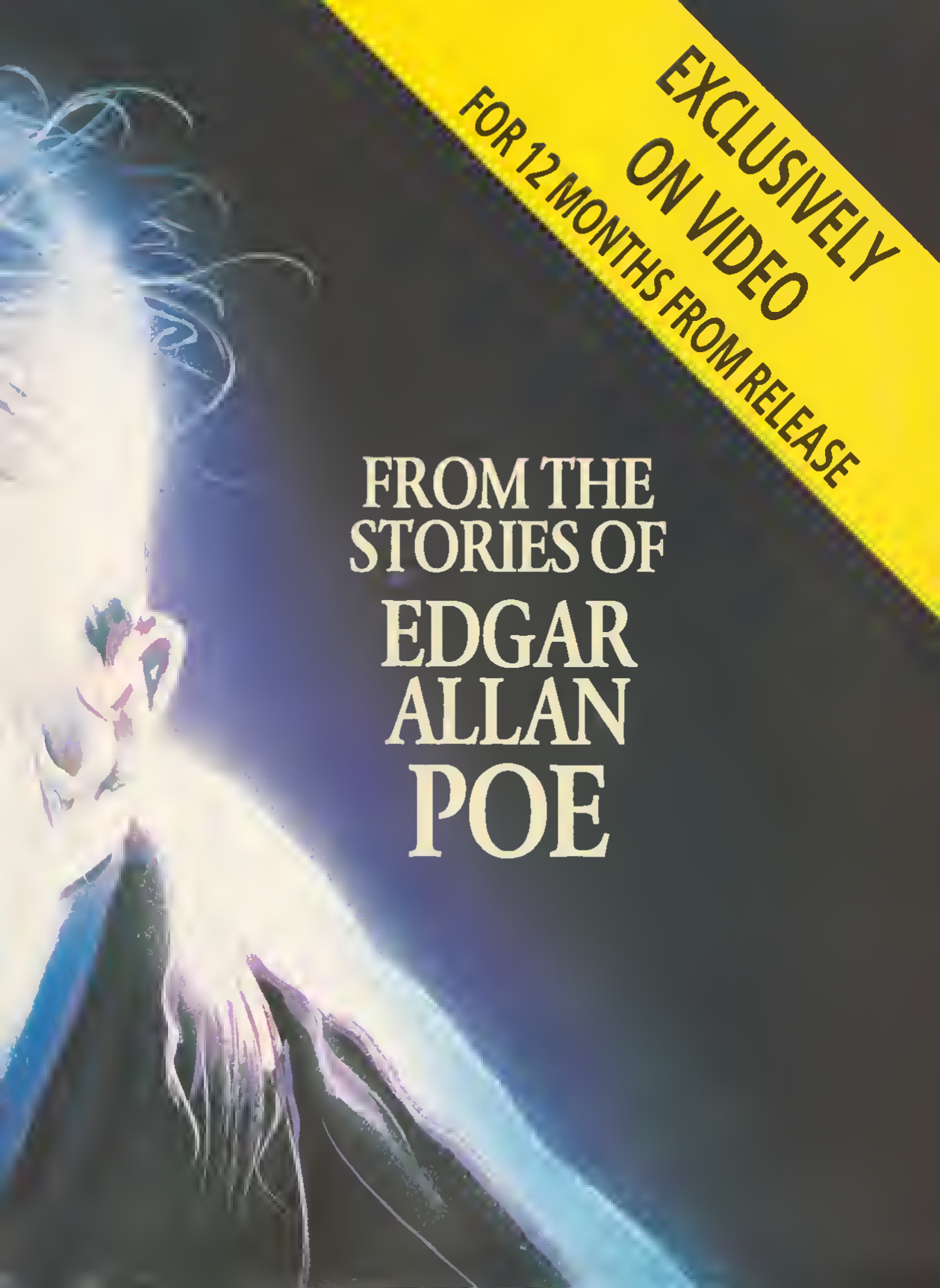
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